

TOWARD A CONTEXTUALLY RELEVANT URBAN LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE HIP-HOP GENERATION

A THESIS

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Ruler Jesus, whose work of redemption on the Cross has caused my affections to change from mine to His.

In addition, it is dedicated to my wife Yvette, my son Immanuel, and to the memory of our deceased daughter Naomi Michelle who would have been 7 years old this year.

Also, to my parents Jimmie and Florence Mason whose sacrifices during the course of their life have made way for this accomplishment.

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ABSTRACT

The following work is designed to aid in the development of urban leaders in the hip-hop generation. This study will provide the groundwork for the processes to be used to initiate leadership development in cities. Leadership development will be viewed as a process rather than an event. Today's church views ministry forms as transferable. The Church must see contextualization as a major need in engaging an obsolete generation. Many Pastor's train pastor's who preach, but not pastor's or leaders who lead. When it comes to the systemic nature of the Hip-hop generation this is even more slim

The author's journey in being developed as a leader through Fellowship Associates and planting Epiphany Fellowship in Philadelphia will be the case study. This case study will include the preparatory process which was nurtured in a leadership training program in Little Rock, Arkansas. Several of the mentors will be interviewed to discuss "how" leaders are to be developed for urban cities in the 21st century. The Hexagoning technique taught in the first Doctoral residency and Dr. Eldin Villafañe's hermeneutical circle will be used to format the data of the paper and the case study sections. Prior to this case study, a theological basis for the systemic nature of the following research will be engaged. A biblical theology of leadership development for cities will be overviewed to have proper ground in the biblical text for our current study. Several resources will be utilized from several disciplines. Missiology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Sociology, and current studies in Christian leadership development will be explored.

PART 1: CLARIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of this Thesis-Project

Every generation of Christians is faced with the responsibility to transmit the gospel faithfully in the context in which they find themselves. Time and time again, many generations of Saints deal with managing the need to be faithful to the biblical nutrition of the gospel and to be contextually relevant within their cultural context. With this in mind, there are times when a Christian's fear of a culture becomes a phobia and causes a retreat from the needed missional engagement that the Church is called. Many times the church responds slowly to their God ordained position to seek redemption in contexts and cultures that are less comfortable to the one in which they are used to.

Even cities have lacked the necessary engagement that is needed to see the rapid transmission of the gospel that it needs. Hip-hop culture has risen as a global cultural form that can neither be ignored nor disengaged by the Church. Leadership as of late has focused much of its attention on cooperate models rather than biblical ones. Therefore, the project at hand views as its intent to play a role in highlighting some of the issues needed to engage the hip-hop generation systemically. Several entry points will be explored as being systemic in what is needed to see viable development in the church's urgent need to engage the hip-hop generation. Eddie Gibbs' book on the "Church Next," does not waste a word in highlighting some of the systemic issues the Church faces in engaging the current generation:

- From living in the past to engaging the present

- From market driven to mission oriented
- From bureaucratic hierarchies to apostolic networks
- From schooling professionals to mentoring leaders
- From following celebrities to encountering saints
- From following dead orthodoxy to living faith
- From attracting a crowd to seeking the lost
- From belonging to believing
- From generic congregations to incarnational communities¹

Although the above reflects a more broad demographic and context, it is equally true as being obstacles that affect reaching the hip-hop generation. At the top of the list of systemic entry points in reaching this generation is Leadership Development. Without adequate leadership, any organism or organization's survival will be limited.

In light of the need to shift in how we approach ministry in the 21st century, the aims of this thesis are the following: (1) to investigate how hip hop has come to social prominence in urban centers and how it has been used thus far to impact a generation. Our intention here is to show the depth of influence hip-hop has and the moguls who influenced it over the years. This will illustrate the absence of missional engagement by the church and the need for leadership to be dispatched to contextualize the gospel to hip-hop. (2) To reflect on how God has used leaders who contextualized and transmitted the gospel faithfully in cities over the centuries to influence the landscape of generations. In this section we will do a biblical theology

¹ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), Back Cover.

of leadership in cities and draw principles from it for our current study. In addition, we will explore the social implications of current leadership development to have a contextual map to work from, as we frame our biblical theology in light of the hip-hop generation; and (3) lastly, we will develop a strategy which will allow for us to prepare leaders who are positioned to live incarnational lifestyles as missionaries to the hip-hop generation. Here we will use the church as the primary preparer and provider of this training of leaders for the hip-hop generation. Being in a constant state of learning is the goal here, rather than developing another traditional expression of Christianity which refuses to adjust to the changing urban landscape of cities.

The Research Questions

The following research questions must be viewed in light of the overarching research question which will be explained in chapter four and five:

Primary Research Question: How can the church develop a contextually relevant leadership development strategy for the hip-hop generation?

Subsidiary Research Questions:

1. **HIP-HOP CULTURE, LEADERSHIP, AND THE CHURCH (CHAPTER ONE):** What is Hip-hop culture, why is Hip-hop a systemically contextual cultural form that needs to be engaged by this generation with the gospel of Jesus Christ, where is the traditional urban church, and why is leadership development needed?
2. **LITERATURE REVIEW (CHAPTER TWO):** What literary sources past and present contribute to the validity of there being a need for leaders to be developed for the hip-hop generation?

3. THEOLOGY (CHAPTER THREE): What theological principles can be extracted from scripture to make a case for the urgent need for urban leadership development in the hip-hop generation?
4. PROJECT DESIGN AND INITIAL “LEARNINGS” (CHAPTER FOUR): What is the consensus of Christian Hip-hoppers on reaching the hip-hop generation? How can the church develop a contextually relevant leadership development strategy for the hip-hop generation?
5. OUTCOMES AND IMPLICATIONS (CHAPTER FIVE): How can Epiphany Fellowship Church play a vital role in implementing the findings of **this** project in Philadelphia, PA and continuing to develop a learning organism as it grows numerically?

Delimitations

1. *Hip-hop Culture.* There are many subcultures of postmodernism that reflect the cultural shifts that are taking place in the cities of the world. However, hip-hop will be the subculture which will be focused on in the current study. Although hip-hop is a global phenomenon, the development of it in American cities will be the limitation. In particular, there will be an overview of the U.S. regional shape of influence it has taken on the east coast, west coast, mid west, and the south in a limited form.
2. *Localities:* Cities will be the place in which the current leadership development strategy will be limited to. It is known that many suburban areas are taking on urban characteristics, but since most are still connected to and

depend on the dominance of a larger city, their influence is not as pervasive as the city that birthed its existence.

3. *Leadership Development:* Hip-hop is a subject that can consume any work, therefore, this study will be framed within the issues concerning leadership develop to those influenced in the contexts where hip-hop is prominent.
4. *Demographic:* The current study will be limited to the generation who came of age during the years of 1960-1995. Likewise, the civil rights generation and post-civil rights generation will be overviewed in their role in setting the stage for the hip-hop generation.

CHAPTER ONE

THE OPPORTUNITY/PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING: HIP-HOP CULTURE AS THE MODERN DAY PIED-PIPER TO A GLOBAL GENERATION

What is the Hip-hop Generation?

The term hip-hop generation is a term that if someone is asked the meaning, according to who you ask, you would hear a different answer. In studying this generation one must begin with the adjective that is used to describe them before framing the cultural form into a generational timeline. Hip-hop can be defined as a cultural movement that began in the Bronx in 1970 through one DJ Cool Herc. Herc would deejay basement parties, which found its way into the streets of the Bronx, N.Y. and caught on throughout that particular borough. During these block parties the DJ would lengthen the beats within songs to develop what is called the break beat. The break beat was used to foster an atmosphere of call and response between the DJ and the crowd.

Hip hop is a cultural movement that began among urban African Americans in New York City in the early 1970s, and has since spread around the world. Some consider beat-boxing the fifth element of hip hop; others might add political activism, hip hop fashion, hip hop slang, double-ditching (an urban form of rope skipping) or other elements as important facets of hip hop. The term has since come to be a synonym for hip hop music and rap to mainstream audiences.²

Hip-hop incorporated the MC or Master of Ceremony to facilitate this **festive** atmosphere which the urban poor enjoyed. As time went on the MC gained the front seat, whereas the DJ became more a part of the background of the culture which was begun by the DJ. Soon what is defined as hip-hop began to broaden to several elements: Emceeing, Deejaying, Breaking, and Graffiti Art. Emceeing is the act of poetically rhyming about a particular topic or worldview over music or through acappellaacapella vocalizing. Later, this form of Hip-hop expression became known as rapping, therefore, the name of the emcee became “rapper”. Deejaying is the act of playing a vinyl album on a turntable and using the turntable as a platform to

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hip_hop.

manipulate the movement of the record to repeat aspects of the song played on it. An album could also be used to make a scratching sound between it being played.

Anyone who plays a record on a turntable can call herself a Deejay. But hip hop deejaying, or *turntablism*, is a complex art. At its simplest it consists of a pair of turntables, an audio mixer, and original recordings. Upon these the deejay performs techniques such as mixing, scratching, cutting, and sampling, to create an entirely new piece of music from the original track.³

Breaking is a dance which was later developed from “pop locking”.

Moreover, the breaking style of dance is a combination of locking, disco dance, and gymnastics.

The breakbeats of hip hop deejaying also gave birth to the dance form known as 'breaking' or 'B-boying'. B-boys would dance during the breaks spun by the deejays, hence the 'B' stands for 'Break'. (The more popular term 'breakdancing' was coined by the media, and is rarely used by breakers themselves.) Breaking is a high-energy combination of complex footwork, spins, kicks and 'freezes' - holding a position balanced on hands, head or shoulders.⁴

Graffiti art is the coding artistic signature used to claim turf, display one's name, or publicize one's neighborhood.

For some reason, a term such as 'graffiti' hasn't really caught on, though the term 'tagging' is often used. The 'tag' is the writer's signature, and the most prevalent example of graffiti art. The tag that made graffiti famous was TAKI 183, the 'nom de graf' of a 17-year-old kid called Demetrius, who tagged as he rode around on the New York subway⁴. When the *New York Times* published an article about him in 1971, graffiti art exploded - especially on the subway. New York's graffiti-covered subway trains are now a symbol of the city, as famous as London's red buses.

There are three main types of graffiti art, the tag being the first. The next stage is the 'throw up', which is an evolved tag with perhaps more of an outline, two colors and so on. The throw up is also the next stage historically, as the advent of the spray can allow mere tagging to graduate to more colorful and intricate styles.⁵

³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A860519>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Each of these forms of Hip-hop expression found its prominence among the indigenous populous of the five “boroughs of NY”. However, the capitol of hip-hop is still hailed as the Bronx borough. Because the poor were plagued by the systemic racism that remains from the 60’s and 70’s, hip-hop became a grassroots voice which found mainstream prominence in the mid 80’s. Songs were mostly comprised of contextualized social analysis of the context of the urban poor who had no one to speak for them. Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five pinned the most vivid picture of the urban ghetto which became the voice of the streets to many African Americans all over the country. The title of this urban sociological hymn is “The Message”,

It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under
 It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under

Broken glass everywhere
 People pissin' on the stairs, you know they just don't care
 I can't take the smell, can't take the noise
 Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice
 Rats in the front room, roaches in the back
 Junkies in the alley with a baseball bat
 I tried to get away but I couldn't get far
 'cuz a man with a tow truck repossessed my car

Don't push me 'cuz I'm close to the edge
 I'm trying not to lose my head
 Uh huh ha ha ha
 It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under⁶

Anyone that was alive during this era of hip-hop could empathize with this as the voice of this generation. Since 1982 hip-hop has taken many directions and today

⁶ http://www.lyricsfreak.com/g/grandmaster+flash/the+message_20062225.html

it has become the missionary of pop culture globally. As the years went on, the generation that was socialized after the civil rights movement found themselves “out of the loop” concerning the direction of American society. America’s non-reconciled racial history became clear as the Nation of Islam and the 5% Nation of Islam saw the potential evident in the hip-hop generation and began to answer the voice of the urban poor black with remnants of philosophies espoused by several branches of the “black power movement”. Armed with a quasi-religiosity, they influenced an era of hip-hop that has waves which still are in the undercurrent of those influence by the culture.

As the church stood on the sidelines bashing hip-hop music (especially the black church), the hip-hop populous, whether converted or not, developed a disdain for Christianity because of the self righteous distance made between church and the culture. This negative apologetic against the church has remained until this day. In the last section of the “problems and settings” section we will discuss this further.

A Historical and Sociological Overview of the Hip-hop Generation

Instead of going through a detailed history of hip-hop, we will point out major historical landmarks that have played a role in thrusting it to a more formalized world platform. Most of hip-hop’s history has been sparked by particular artist broadening it as a legit genre to be reckoned with musically. There is a multitude of underground currents that catapulted hip-hop above ground, but nothing did so as “Rapper’s Delight” did in 1979 by the Sugar Hill Gang. Fusing rap with disco and R&B was a brilliant combination causing rap to develop its first public platform. Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five brought the street element and other elements of hip-hop above ground in 1979. G and the Five introduced the world to the other side of the

disco arena through ushering us into the streets and communities where hip-hop got its birth. Pulling on its social origins, a social analysis of the “hood” was proclaimed with undeniable brevity.

Run DMC came on the scene a few years later merging hip-hop with rock 'n roll, developing for hip-hop a global following that thrust it to a global platform, which rock 'n roll controlled for years. By the end of the 1980's hip-hop was still viewed as a marginalized genre of music. This marginalization was the hot bed for “gangster rap” to surface from its underground origins. NWA, Ice-T and many others gave birth to the voice of the West coast's rendition of hip-hop, contextualized to the southern California vocal drawls and gang culture. On the East coast “conscious rap” was gaining leverage as the Nation of Islam and 5% Nation's influence made way into groups like Public Enemy. These groups became what were called “blacks CNN”. In modern rap, Public Enemy (PE) is the leading, though by no means the only, force espousing a Black Nationalist ideology. Public Enemy's Chuck D, recognized by many as the leader of radical rap, calls Hip Hop music “black folks CNN”.⁷

Problems with radical solutions became the new voice of the hip-hop generation. When many “non-black” radio and TV stations would not play rap videos and music, it seemed to be a slur against the impact and prominence of a music genre, as well as the national rejection of a generation.

Radio had long calcified into racialized formats—Album-Oriented Rock for whites, Urban Contemporary for Blacks. Rap was the most exciting new music to come along in years, but there was no room for it either. MTV had burst into the scene by championing rock and new wave, and all but excluding

⁷ Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal, *That's The Joint: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader* (New York, NY and London, England: Routledge, 2004), 356.

Black artists. Only after Columbia reportedly threatened to boycott the young network in 1983 did MTV begin airing Michael Jackson videos.⁸

It wasn't until 1988 that MTV took seriously the potential in Rap music by starting a show called "Yo MTV Raps". It went on to be a cultural phenomenon in the rap genre.

During the early 1990's Teddy Riley fused hip-hop and R&B into what is known as the "New Jack Swing". Since this collaboration Hip-Hop and R&B have become almost cousins. As the early 1990's took shape rap went through a multitude of changes. As both the East and West coasts sought to claim a prominent place in the culture, the west's Tupac Shakur and the east's The Notorious BIG became lords of their particular coasts. Although they began as friends, the rival passions of these coasts began to consume both men. Their passions for personifying the section of hip-hop called "thuggism" became the bullets that killed them both. Many have come and gone, but when these two men lost their lives, each became a martyr to youths and young adults. In becoming martyrs, they were transformed from lords of two coasts to icons of a generation.

This is when many believe we became a generation, a generation called "The Hip-hop Generation." Although the hip-hop generation began years before these events, it became clear that this was a different generation that has raised post civil rights, black power, and activists/hippy generations. With this in mind, what makes the hip hop generation a generation and what makes this generation different?

Up until recently, our generation has mainly been defined by the prefix "post-". We have been post-civil rights, postmodern, poststructural, postfeminist, post-black, and post-soul. We're poster children of "post-," the leftovers in

⁸ Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005), 244-245.

the dirty kitchen of yesterday's feast. We have been the Baby Boom echo. (Is Baby Boom Narcissus in the house?) We have been Generation X. Now they even talk about Generation Y. And Why? Probably because Y comes after X.⁹

Chang draws out the complexity of branding a generation from without. For this reason the hip-hop generation is a challenging generation to classify. However, cultures and generations usually develop its own staple of what is commonly held, which gives way to labeling it a culture or generation. As we discussed in the previous section, the hip-hop generation as any other generation is an unfolding narrative of yet another generation attempting to forge its own story of redemption.¹⁰ Since there are a multitude of qualities that are the marks of this generation, we will choose a few: Glocally urbanized, technologically aware, entrepreneurial, and informal.

It is not that the hip-hop generation has not had leadership. It is just that it has not had Indigenous Christian leadership that remains faithful to a biblical philosophy of kingdom. *Glocally Urbanized or Glocalization* is the merging of cooperation between global community and local community. This newly coined term is one that reflects a desire to see local communities around the globe remain intricately connected for the purpose of global impact, one that is shaped by the local context in which one lives. The Glocal Forum defines the concept comprehensively:

Glocalization is a new paradigm for international relations and an innovative practice of development cooperation. The Glocalization strategy empowers local communities, linking them to global resources and knowledge while facilitating initiatives for peace and development. It provides opportunities for the local communities to direct positive social change in the areas that

⁹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰ Anyone trying to find redemption out side of Christ is plowing for another kingdom. However, what would it look like if Christians indigenous to the culture made much of the larger redemptive narrative to see Himself Glorified.

most directly affect them, and to shape an innovative and more equitable international system.

In particular, Glocalization attributes a special role to cities as international actors, and to city-to-city cooperation as a tool to counter global challenges and promote economic development and peace building activities. Through enhanced connectivity, city-to-city networks can have access to the resources of the private and public sector and utilize these resources to address local needs, thus increasing the impact and cost-effectiveness of development projects for sustainable peace. Cities and local authorities represent the focal point of Glocalization. However, Glocalization is carried out by a number of key players - from the public sector, to international institutions and private sector companies - small and large, local and global.¹¹

Hip-hop in particular is an example of this concept as a systems actor. It began in the South Bronx, but has now had a global expansion reaching the contours of a global economy.

Since the hip-hop culture/generation is “sort of” a subculture/generation of postmodern culture/generations (Gen x-y), it takes on the characteristics of postmodernism contextualized within its ethos. However, one must recognize that this has not merely taken place on a “secular” stage, but also on an evangelical one. Glocalism has reared its face within the place of younger evangelicals. Younger Evangelical Christians who were socialized during the rise of hip-hop have grown in presence in the US and now globally. Robert Webber states that “evangelicalism at the end of the [21st] century was no longer an American phenomena but a *global movement*. Already by the end of the century, new evangelical voices from Africa, Asia, and Latin America were raising new theological questions...by the end of the century, evangelicalism was a movement of great theological diversity”.¹² Therefore,

¹¹ http://www.glocalforum.org/?id=197&id_p=193&lng=en.

¹² Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Faces the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 37.

the hip-hop generation is developing a larger stage which must be engaged by the Gospel.

Technologically Aware. As the world turns on a scientific axis, there is an information revolution taking place. From television, digital cable, high tech cell phones, computer speed, to video games all represent the age of technology. So much can be done with less time and space. Phones have internet, text messaging, cameras, and computer capabilities built into them which have more power in them than the first computers; all at your fingertips and on your hip. This does not make technology bad; it gives us an idea about the generation. You can create a song on your computer. A basic home studio can be in the corner of a room in one's home. The hip-hop generation deeply employs technology from the poor to the rich. Music is no longer bought from a store, but it can be downloaded to an ipod. The tech savvy of this generation plays into the role of how glocalization is taking place. Blogging on the internet between someone in the US and Taiwan is happening, but how are we capitalizing on the opportunity to develop leaders who invade the technologically global stage for the Gospel?

Images through technology add to the learning quotients of the hip-hop generation. Music videos and movies are much more technologically advanced than in the past. If a movie has special effects, it must exceed that of the movies which preceded it in visual excellence.

Technological advances within the market such as the music video have revealed the regional aesthetic diversity of hip hop. Music videos allowed regional artists the space to craft personal and social narratives and “represent” their home not only with visuals but by contextualizing the style

and delivery of their rhymes to a national audience without fear of retribution.¹³

What if we more effectively utilized technology for the gospel in the hip hop generation? Although there is much technology employed in ministry for the present generation, much of it is what would be considered “corny (substandard)”. Therefore, leaders must be nurtured for urban ministry in the area of techno-savvy leaders, and access to technology must be considered.

Entrepreneurial. According to whose list you read, entrepreneurialism (street) is an element of hip-hop culture. In the golden and silver ages of hip-hop, artists did not own much of their career financially, but in recent years that has changed drastically. Moreover, much of hip hop is dominated by artists becoming moguls in the area of music, media, fashion, and many other ventures. Jay-Z, Puffy, and Master P are some of the most foundational players in developing entrepreneurialism as an option within the hip-hop generation. Now many on the street level have developed the dream of becoming independent business leaders. Urban hubs are filled with business people—from the soul food restaurant to the stands which act as a one stop shop for urban merchandise. Many find the roots of entrepreneurialism in the drug culture. Right or not, Christians must find viable ways of redemptive entrepreneurialism which is contextual to a particular urban environment.

Informal. The informality of this generation is refreshing. Hip-hoppers are more detached from the cultural loyalties to American culture than past generations. Even the MC/Rapper uses the informality as a platform for their voice, even though much of their music is an over exaggeration. “Keepin it real” is one of the staples or

¹³ Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal. *That's the Joint: The Hip-hop studies Reader* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 172.

slogans of the current generation. Although much of rap is hyperbolic realism in a dream format, the sincerity is connected to comprehending the needs of one's target audience and crafting the music and visual media around what is culturally familiar to them. For instance, an artist understands the pulse of the passions of their audience and frames the video around a story of tragedy, violence, sex, relationships, and money which draw hip-hoppers into a world that is but a dream to them. With this in mind, the informality comes from seeing the informal dress and language of the artist enjoying the spoils of host American culture without the conformity to its cultural vices.

Hip-hop nihilism is at the root of this generation's philosophy of life. Informality inherent within the hip-hop generation is fueled by nihilism. This nihilism has caused the civil rights generation to fear the hip-hop generation. Because of the continued remnants of social oppressiveness, many have dismissed the effectiveness of American leadership structures to disseminate proper justice. Kitwana in his book "*The Hip-hop Generation*" speaks of nihilism in terms of the antagonist in a black movie becoming the protagonist of the oppressed. He sites Menace II Society, New Jack City, and Juice as examples of the phenomena. The strongest character in the movies is the gangster or the ones who defy organized host social structures through informal street "wisdom".

The Urban Leader vs. the Suburban Leader

Currently, most opportunities for development of leaders are only possible through a staff position adjacent to existing strong leaders. The problem with this is that once one is part or full time staff in a ministry, the visionary demands of that

would be mentor is served while leaving the follower to fend for himself.

Observation serves as the only teacher for the potential leader. Intentionally being developed as a leader becomes a distant dream. The young staff member or volunteer had in mind a more intimate relationship with the leader to develop in every area possible; but that desire becomes so distant that the cycle is repeated once the young potential leader is placed in a position of “prominence”.

Upon interviewing 15-20 seminary graduates and current students, it was found that each hungers to be intentionally mentored to be a strong leader in an urban setting. A significant amount of the books on leadership today are geared towards suburban and rural, Anglo-American, middle to upper class males. Conn expresses his concern:

However, a good portion of these resources develop a concept of leadership that makes no reference to the context to which it may apply, whether suburban or urban, this culture or that culture. While the bible’s direction for leaders is truly transcultural, the way we apply it practically must vary from one context to another... When books and talks on leadership fail to articulate the context for which they are intended, readers and hearers mistakenly assume that the direction offered will apply in any cultural context...Very little is written or taught concerning leadership that consciously address the urban context.¹⁴

Conn’s findings affirm our concern for the urban context having new leaders to represent Christ and glorify God through replicating image bearers. America is going through urban renewal in almost every major city and the suburbs are becoming more urban than in the past.

Ideally, one would hope that this work would spur further development in the area of intentional urban leadership development across the nation and even the

¹⁴ Harvie M. Conn and Manuel Ortiz, *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City, & the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 377.

world. The author's desire is to engage the current church leadership (as a son 1Tim. 5:1-2) to see their biblical responsibility to include urban leadership development as priority and strategic. Moreover, there must be drastic distinction made between the urban leader's context and the suburban leader's context. See the chart below.¹⁵

Suburban Churches	Urban Churches
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Middle-class focus+	Lower/Middle- to lower class focus
Larger campus/facility	Smaller campus/ facility
Sunday morning drive ministry	Ministry drives Sunday mornings
Evangelism precursor to social ministry	Social ministry precursor to evangelism
Educational needs: small group	Educational needs: "survival" studies
Counseling/therapy ministries	Support groups/substance abuse groups
Worship-professional quality emphasis	Worship-group participation emphasis
Children/youth-more outings socials	Children/youth-more family-centered, getting kids off the street
Offerings support the church	Usually church needs supplemental income
Church members go somewhere for short-term missions	Church members receive others to help with short-term mission
Staff-specialists in ministry	Staff-generalists in ministry
"if you build, they will come"	"if you go to them, they will come to you"
Preaching-more epistles	Preaching-more Gospels
Icon-Bill Hybels	Icon-Martin Luther King Jr.

The above chart is a generalization, but it serves well in showing the overall differences between the two contexts. These differences must be taken into account when ministry is being done in an urban environment. Clearly, there are aspects of suburban ministry that urban leaders covet to see executed in the city, but the road is different. Also, one must consider the contextual significance of what is coveted by the urban leader. Every good idea is not a contextual idea. Vision must always take into account context.

¹⁵Tom Jones, *Church Planting From The Ground Up* (Joplin, MI: College Press, 2004), 43.

Urban leaders have been forced to look to suburban paradigms of ministry to find a viable example for ministry. Because urban ministry is un-nurtured by the universal church (because of impatient for long term results), urban environments are viewed as leadership graveyards. Deaths of ministry have been so frequent in cities because urban leaders are trained to fight with Saul's armor. In wearing Saul's armor, urban leaders are weighed down with Saul's expectation in battle. David agrees with Saul on the need for weapons in battle (practice), but they disagree on the type of weaponry.

The American Church and Contextual Stagnancy

At the top of the list of vices of contextual stagnancy is the seeker-sensitive ministry strategy vs. missional ministry. As the church has abandoned the city for the suburbs, and is flourishing outside the context of urban environments, she has found that in this time of comfort and prosperity a world has come into existence that does not know the Church that was the center of the urban metropolis. The urban Church has become desperate because of the difficulty of resources, leadership, facilities, and opportunities for local mission drying up. Much of the work of the ministry began to take the shape of prominent suburban churches. Willow Creek and Saddleback became the *sine qua non* of successful ministry. These suburban leaders did their homework on their context and developed a contextual platform for the gospel which has become the poster child for church growth.

The typical religious bookstore in North America overflows with books on successful churches with “add-water-and-stir” instructions on how to follow their example, how-to manuals for every conceivable problem a struggling

congregation might face, and analyses of the myriad crises with which the church is grappling.¹⁶

Desperate for a solution, many hurting pastors both suburban and urban alike have adopted the methods and models from these giants and transported them to their context.

Many found these methods and models to have a level of success. However, those who found levels of success and those who failed (for whatever reason) reflected a transported expression of ministry, experienced a gap between the contexts they were seeking to engage and the methods and models adopted. Little did the urban and suburban church know that a new area of secularism and a new generation would quickly become prominent. Hence, the Church no longer has its privileged position in the eyes of society, but has become the target by a society that views itself as the protagonist and the Church as the antithesis. Darrell Guder states,

While modern missions have led to an expansion of world Christianity, Christianity in North America has been moved (or been moved) away from its position of dominance as it has experienced the loss not only of numbers, but of power and influence within society...North American religiosity is changing profoundly by becoming more pluralistic, more individualistic, and more private. Religion fits into North American secularism in a remarkable synthesis that the student of religious behavior finds fascinating. But for the Christian who takes the gospel of Jesus Christ seriously, this religiosity is a weighty challenge¹⁷

With this in mind, the above has had a more profound effect on the urban context, than in many suburban contexts where interaction and relational connectedness is hidden. Whereas in the city, a more clear and realistic expression of this is overt rather than convert.

¹⁶ Darrell Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending Church of North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1998), 2.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1.

Now the urban leader is back to the drawing board because modernism has come to a close on the American missional landscape. At this point, post-modernity or neo-paganism has become the philosophy of the lost and this is the place the leader in the city finds himself. Not necessarily engulfed by these worldviews, but finds his surroundings saturated with them. Because of this drastic change, there has been a decline in churches in urban areas and an incline of churches in suburban areas. Regentrification has played a vital role in attracting suburbanites to the city once more. Although it is initiated by a non-homogenous group to be reached, the city has been a hot bed for a committed focus. Yet the problem now lies with those who have been in the city for years and are not being engaged, but are being pushed out. Many white leaders choose to see the need to play a role in just reaching the new urban young hip middle-class urbanite, but neglect the indigenous contingent which will unjustly face extinction in wake of the new plans for cities. Washington D.C. used to be called “chocolate city”, now the changes that have taken place for the good of visual esthetics do not benefit those city dwellers that have lived there for years, but have been pushed to Maryland’s Prince Georges County.

The urban leader must be prepared to engage the injustices found in much of the regentrification of cities as well as engaging non-ethnic churches to intentionally interact with indigenous people groups in the city. The suburban church must not just send people from the suburbs into the city, but must help develop those who are indigenous to the city to contextually engage their circle of influence.

The Need for Intentional Redeemed Contextual Manliness

Masculinity has been misconstrued, by the media, hip-hop, and the Church. Each of these platforms of modern influence has played a role in marring a biblical and theological picture of manhood. Although it is the Church's responsibility to develop and proclaim a more Christo-centric understanding of manhood, the media and hip-hop culture has painted a frail picture of men which many American men seek to attain to. Hip-hop has been a promoter of the more stereotypical man as a prominent expression generally. By way of pimpology, thuggism, and a swinger's lifestyle, the MC became the epitome of female exploitation. In addition, those young men growing up in urban areas continued to develop an affinity for this free falling sense of male prowess. Over time, women played on this view of themselves for the purpose of male attention and financial gain (although it is only brief).

In the media, to be politically correct is to be overly egalitarian. Whenever a woman attained something that was only attained by men, it was . Clearly there are places that need to be opened for women to enter, however there came a point at which the lines of femininity and maleness became blurred. With 75% of men in prison nationally being black men¹⁸, it is paramount that manhood regains its theocentric roots. Christ must be seen and proclaimed by manly men. Not soft, quasi-men. Manhood must be biblical and cultural. Cultural in the sense of the context being engaged must recognize it as manhood, yet see some sign of a redemptive paradox that places Christian manhood on a hill. A biblical theology of manhood must be faithful to God and men in order to be validly acceptable and effective.

¹⁸ A population behind bars: According to the Philadelphia Prison System's current figures, 70 percent of the incarcerated population is Black – and growing. Philadelphia Tribune:Losing a Generation, by Larry Miller

Without the biblical order of men taking its place as urban leaders, much of the viable future of Christianity in the city will vanish. Black midwives have stood in the gap for long enough and it is time for their role to decrease and indigenous men to increase.

The Mobilization of Youth and Young Adults

Due to the dedication of the civil rights generation, much of the leadership responsibility of the Church has been taken care of to a fault. The bourgeoisie/black power/hippie generations eased up the level of intensity of raising children.

For our parent's generation, the political ideals of civil rights and Black power are central to their worldview. Our parent's generation placed family, spirituality, social responsibility, and Black pride at the center of their identity as Black Americans. They, like their parents before them, looked to their elders for values and identity. The core set of values shared by a large segment of the hip-hop generation—Black America's generation X—stands in contrast to our parents' worldview. For the most part, we have turned to ourselves, our peers, global images and products, and the new realities we face for guidance. In the process, the values and attitudes described above anchor our worldview.¹⁹

Therefore, the hip-hop generation has not had to fully carry the weight of responsibility for being leaders in the local church. In light of this reality, this generation has displayed the lack of biblical equipment to transmit the gospel faithfully in the city. They have been hailed as the church of tomorrow and have been called by the previous generations to turn off their contextual garb to reflect a “dignified platform.” Waiting to be the church of tomorrow, unredeemed Hip-hop dominated their cultural matrix and provided an irresponsible and individualistic opportunity for adulthood. Opportunistic entrepreneurialism provides a lust for 15 minutes of fame. Lost in the pastoral leadership of secular hip-hop icons, this

¹⁹ Bakari Kitwana, *The Hip-hop Generation: Young Blacks And The Crisis In African-American Culture*. (New York, NY: Basic Civita Books, 2002), 7.

generation has not had it hard enough to need the church. Moreover, one growing up today must be convinced that the church is a viable mechanism for growth and development. Also, there must be an urban apologetic developed. This urban apologetic will serve as the true application of biblical Christianity rather than a reluctant stance of calling reckless abandonment “the use of wisdom”. Because Christianity, of all types, in the U.S has been forced to the edges of culture, it is no longer viewed as a need to this generation. With that in mind, Christ through the church, by way of urban leadership, must be reinserted into an incarnational influence in the culture.

Unredeemed Hip-hop has filled a long and empty void left by the past generation’s intentional or unintentional neglect of not relevantly connecting to the hip-hop generation. The inability to appreciate youth culture has been a massive flaw of the church. Attempting to force feed youth and young adults a form of culture (prepackaged, approved, closed house, and traditional modernistic Christian Culture) has scarred many. The force feeding of the hip-hop generation by the traditional church’s culture remedy for spiritual depravity has created great anger; given the hypocrisy of the feeding culture that has had its nakedness uncovered, among others, the Nation of Islam. Although many of the claims of the Nation of Islam against Christianity were true, many of its attempts to attack the objective data concerning the historic Christianity were unwarranted and without concrete evidence. Yet much damage has been dispensed that has placed a shadow of doubt on the fertile soil of youthful frustrations.

No black leader has had more of an impact on the Hip-hop generation than Louis Farrakhan. This is increasingly evident in the outward trappings of

some young African-Americans, the post Civil Rights Era Blacks who came of age after the pitched struggle for integration and who have taken up rap music and neo-nationalism as their preferred form of cultural expression. Pictures of Farrakhan and the words “Nation of Islam” adorn the postmodern uniforms of black and Latino youth in sparkling suburbs and dying cities alike: On oversized T-shirts, jackets, and clean baseball caps, the silk-screened image of Farrakhan often shares space with those of Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, and Nelson Mandela...their song lyrics sprinkled with allusions to NOI teachings and tensions between blacks and Jews. Several hip-hop artists have joined the Nation...the generational rift between young African-Americans and their parents and grandparents, with hip-hop music, black neo-nationalism, and Louis Farrakhan cited as contra indicators of the divide.²⁰

If Christ-centered, theologically developed, Spirit-filled, Gospel/Kingdom driven leaders, incarnational, and contextually appropriate leaders to the hip-hop generation are not developed, the systemic influence of this generation will lose traction. Hence, there must be missionaries who are equipped, resourced, and dispatched to engage the hip-hop generation in this crisis.

²⁰ Amy Alexander, *The Farrakhan Factor: African-American Writers on Leadership, Nationhood, and Minister Louis Farrakhan* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1998), 184-85.

PART 2: CONCEPTUALIZATION

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us...is the sense of this section of our conversation. In light of the issues which have been presented in this work and the issues to be presented, there is a greater context that sets the current work in position for urban ministry. The following authors have written on a myriad of topics surrounding either urban ministry, leadership development, contextualization, missiology, Christology, or ecclesiology. However, the integration or merging of these topics many times is absent.

The Fifth Discipline

Foundational to the research methods inherent in our hermeneutical process is found in the book *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter M. Senge²¹. The premise of the book is built upon the assumption that most organizations engage the symptoms of their problems, rather than working through the root issue(s) that lace within the cultural fabric of the organization. Senge gives five areas which can aid an organization in its ability to move on a journey to developing a healthy learning organization: systems thinking, team learning, shared vision, mental model, and personal mastery.

Systems Thinking is the primary discipline because it seeks to cause the most change without causing a multitude of problems. It looks at what is negatively effecting an organization and sees where in the organization these negative effects

²¹ Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, NY: Currency Double Day Dell Publishing, 1990).

have touched and develops a systemic solution to the problem. In creating this solution, the hope is that the changes whether subtle or gradual will not tear the organization apart.

Although the book is on organizational development, there are a multitude of implications for leadership development. For instance, in relation to hip-hop culture, an area such as personal mastery is crucial. Without personal mastery, one would indulge in the spoils that come from leading without developing in one's character and skill set. Success can easily make one stagnant in one's growth and development. Therefore, being a leader that is a self starter in the area of personal mastery proves to be paramount in developing other leaders, because it means that the leader is developing also.

Systems thinking must be applied by the urban leader on every level. If the urban leader is not trained in systemic thinking or is a systems actor, there will be many fires which are attacked, but the causes of urban fires will be overlooked. The urban leader must always be aware of the seen unseen systems that are present in the context of their ministry.

Team learning is an area which produces the maximum amount of learning within an organization. Dialogue between teammates gives each participant the ability to engage with one another in a way that lays before one another what is on their mind. Practicing this will help them to do what Senge calls “thinking together.”²² Hip-hop culture has within it an improvisation aspect like jazz where the MC (Master of Ceremonies) is able to do what we call “free-style”²³. While the MC

²² Ibid,10.

²³ Freestyle is the act of coming up with rhymes from the top of one's head spontaneously.

rhymes freestyle, another makes musical sounds with their mouth, called a “beatbox”. Others are able to chime in on rapping over the beatbox. This team learning cycle is called a “cypha”. During the cypha, the worldview of the MC is delivered to those surrounding context.

Mental Model is a major part of hip-hop culture. The deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures that influence how one understands the world and how to take action, are at the core of hip-hop expressiveness. All art forms are driven in part by the artist’s mental models; however, hip-hop was founded upon that premise. Whether gangster rap, conscious rap, commercial rap, or musical production, each seek to give a picture of how things are and how things can be. Hexagoning is done by the MC through listening to the voice of its constituency and expressing a shared vision. That’s what gives “street credibility” and causes capitalistic gain through record sales.

These five disciplines can play a powerful role in engaging the unique needs of this generation. The urban leader must give careful consideration to these implications

The Hip-hop Generation

*The Hip-hop Generation*²⁴ is a sociological jewel that must be on the shelf of every urban leader. Many ask how can I understand this generation. This book is a first step. Bakari Kitwana lands on the premise that the civil rights generation dropped the ball in developing the generation that was socialized after the abolishment of segregation. Moreover, that first tier of the hip-hop generation has

²⁴ Bakari Kitwana. *The Hip Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis in African-American Culture* (New York, NY: Basic Civitas Books, 2002).

grasped some of the post-civil rights concepts like black power. Their understanding of black power has been developed into a global voice with the media as its microphone and the world as its stage. Flowing from the institutional acceptance of blacks in America is the steam of broken promises that the hip-hop generation can still feel. With this in mind, Kitwana begins to lay out some areas of action which have marked this generation like, social activism, political involvement, and musical indoctrination.

Kitwana talks about the inherent nihilism found in hip-hop culture. He drives away at the fact that this is found most prevalently in the African-American found in US inner cities. In light of that reality, hip-hop developed a love affair with the gangster. This love affair finds its culmination in movies like Scarface, Jason's Lyric, and Boyz in the Hood. The message of each film was missed and an embrace of its thuggish overtone was adopted. His point is that hearing the civil-rights generation proclaim benefits was frustrating because very little of it could be seen in the everyday environment of the hip-hop generation. Therefore, hip-hop provided an outlet from which the inner-city breeding ground of nihilism has a voice. Kitwana states,

Resolving the hip-hop generation's confusion about the extent to which our own reality—from life advantages to disadvantages, for better or worse—has evolved out of our parents' experience is central to this inquiry. For most of our lives, we've been hit over the head with the civil rights pains as the monumental achievement of our parents' generation, but it is evident to us that those gains haven't secured our inalienable rights. Black gangster films attempt to answer the question, how exactly did our generation's worldview evolve out of our parents' generation? And these films take on this anger that many hip-hop generationers hold for an older generation that in many ways, we believe, has failed us.²⁵

²⁵ Ibid, 133.

Hip-hop became the liberator. Therefore, there was an abandonment of values which the vacuum of postmodernism was ready to engulf. This chasm or generational gap made way for surrogate parents to step into the picture. Because of this surrogate parent called hip-hop culture, indigenous leaders must be developed to engage this generation. Leaders who understand the sociological impact on the post civil-right having heard promises that have not seemed have been fulfilled from the perspective of his generation. Contextual sensitivity of this type will foster common ground like never before.

There are a multitude of problems found in his commentary of this generation. His final three observations are commendable, but not without the need to be addressed. Systemically thinking, the hip-hop generation has been unable to have an un-fragmented, non-commercial, and theocentric leadership core. The lack of Theocentrism is obvious, but the former two have been a frustration. Consumerism and the enjoyment of being the missionary of the global pop culture has driven the direction of hip-hop. Therefore, faith in a clear leadership vision and direction, driven by clear core values has been absent. This work seeks to show the place of grassroots leadership who are systemically trained to lead in major urban cities.

Christ & Culture

The book *Christ & Culture*²⁶ proved to be one of the most thought provoking books that I have read. It deals with the ongoing, age old discussion of the relationship between Christ and culture, and God's redeemed ones understanding of

²⁶ H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951).

that relationship. In view of the writer's style and rhetoric, the read was quite the challenge, but a good one.

Our enduring problem as pilgrims passing through this weary land and our ability to make sense of the journey through a kingdom lens in how to engage our context with the person and work of Jesus Christ. Niebuhr's running dialogue with Christian leaders across the centuries was quite riveting; viewing the varying extremes and attempts to be balanced challenged me. For the most part each leader quoted and critiqued was attempting to find a way to make sense of the Christian's responsibility on earth. Whether a synthesist, dualist, conversionist, or heretic; each caused me to think. Are we to separate ourselves from culture at the expense of engaging it? Are we to totally immerse ourselves in the affairs of this world without a solid measuring rod to engage it? Are we to hold Christ and culture equally valid, not seeing either as opposed to the other? Or are we to hold the two in tension? At the end of the book, I was expecting a summary of the contents and a "proper view" of how to deal with this "enduring problem." Maybe the author's goal was to present a general summary of the views and call us to a personal conclusion or to create one not listed. After having read so many exegetical commentaries, upon hearing the views, I expected the same, in that most commentaries present views without conclusions.

Two issues I would like to look at in this book is Christology and Paul's dualism. Although this book is a book on ethics by an ethics professor, I was disappointed at the disjunctive Christology spewed throughout this work. Each perspective on Christology was more on the ethics of Christ (works) rather than the

Morphe (Form or essence Phil.2:5-11) of who He is as fully human and fully God. The nature of the incarnation must influence one's view of Christ and culture. Christ is the expression of the divine life of God expressed through a human frame. While culture points to the shared values and legacy that are held in common among a given people group, this allows for comprehensive social interaction within a particular cultural milieu. At many points I tarried through the book. The Author even admits that the meaning of Christ presented was inadequate (although it will always fall short).

As to the issue of the dualistic in Paul, I was bewildered at the statement that Paul has dualistic tenets within his discourse framework. Although Niebuhr did not call Paul a dualist, he seems to say that dualists thought process flowed out of Pauline thought. The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology states:

Christian Theology generally accepts a modified moral dualism, recognizing God as supremely good and Satan as a deteriorated creature bent everywhere upon the intrusion of evil. This however is not dualism in the sense of its usual definition, since Christian theology does not consider Satan to be ultimate or original, and sees him ultimately excluded from the universe.²⁷

The dualism described in the book *Christ & Culture* seems to be that God an ultimate force in the universe and evil is the other. It would seem that there is dualistic sovereignty between the two. Maybe I understood the point wrong, but only God is ultimate.

Christology, Missiology, and Ecclesiology must be studied and integrated for the purpose of developing and refining our understanding of urban missions. Outside

²⁷ Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, (Grand Rapids Michigan: Baker Books, 1994), 334.

the context of the scholarly vacuum, there must be scholarly practitioners who develop case studies of the effectiveness of the cultural engagement formulas.

Christ & Culture plays a major role in this work because the urban leader engaging hip-hop culture must be convinced of this culture's redeem-ability, a clear understanding of how Christ incarnates into it, and how to train other how to do the same. Because there are many ministries which abhor hip-hop, there must be deep conviction that provides leaders with the faithfulness to minister in the face of opposition. Clarity in the way it looks for Christ to invade hip-hop culture allows for indigenous leaders to be developed and to in turn do the same.

City of God City of Satan

*City of God, City of Satan*²⁸ will serve as a bountiful reference work for doing present and future urban ministry. Although I have read several books on the topic, this work ranked high. Because it intentionally draws from the corpus of scripture, Robert Linthicum's work proved to be a breath of fresh air. Somewhere in our "doing of theology," we have lost the art and science of biblical theology. Many times I get frustrated reading systematic theology in books that are not built upon a solid biblical theology assume that the reader knows the presuppositions the writer has in mind.

Linthicum highlights throughout this work the reality of conflict and battle. Although he does not present Satan as infinite evil, he deals with the reality of this opponent's formidability. As we say in the hood "don't sleep." Moreover this ethnic colloquialism is a humble reminder of the imminent difficulty one will face in

²⁸ Robert C. Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan: A Biblical Theology of the Urban Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991).

submitting to God's call to the city. Consequently this was not a horror movie which presented evil in such an elaborately sinister fashion, that good barely makes it.

Christ our Lord is exalted high. Colossians chapter 1 and chapter 2 are referred to as an encouragement through the book for the urban Christian. The preeminence of our Lord Jesus Christ is the pressing point within this book, one which fosters encouragement in the midst of the discouragement of the disciple in the city.

Furthermore, Linthicum gives a biblical theology of the city from Genesis to Revelation. God wanted cities in the beginning and will bring the ultimate reality of the holy city into fruition in the end. Throughout, Christ's redemptive qualities expressed in His incarnation are the practical reference point presented for the urban minister. Of course, the incarnation is one of the running themes in the book which serves as a healthy reminder of what it means to do ministry. John chapter 1 was drawn on for this premise. In drawing on the imagery of the incarnation of the God-Man, the author also turns to the state of the world when Christ came. The Roman Empire was ruling and Greek culture was still dominant, therefore the world was more urban than it had ever been to this point in human history. As a result, Linthicum express the reality of the economic, social, political, and religious climate of cities. By paralleling first century cities with modern day cities, he does not idealize city ministry. Although he wrote of these realities, he drove home the redeeming qualities within the city. At the core of redemption (in purpose) is a vision of a broken culture reflecting the glory of God, not merely rejection.

By far, the most frequently mentioned philosophy of urban ministry is the development of indigenous leadership. Linthicum spends much time unpacking this

issue. He states that without indigenous leadership development there will be no ownership of a church's ministry in that community. With this in mind, indigenous leaders must be developed for the hip-hop generation. No longer are we children, but adults. There are multiplicities of churches which still view the hip-hop culture as a demonic form. EX Ministries²⁹ has promoted that hip-hop as a culture is inherently demonic and must be abandoned. While *rappin* and *breakin* would still be considered redeemable for ministry, hip-hop as a culture is considered to be unacceptable. Moreover, conferences are held all over the country where church leaders and parents gather by the thousands to hear ex-ministries blow people away with their mystical theology of culture. Although some of the claims of content and exploits are valid, the baby is thrown out with the bath water. Because of this treatment of hip-hop culture, the church is given a great sigh of relief that they don't have to be a missionary to such a culture that seemed distant from their own any way.

It was a little perturbing reading the section in the book on Jerusalem. Much of the discussion centered on the city a little allegorically. Whenever God speak to a city, He is speaking to its inhabitants, not to the city itself. In using personification, God speaks to the human development within the city, in order that He may speak relevantly to those in the city or if exiled, to those in captivity of their involvement in its demise (Ezekiel 16). The personification of the city can be more effectively utilized to talk about the cultural development that the inhabitants propagated by what God provided inside the city. Therefore, the principle is for the people of God to not let the provision of God cause them to forget their God (Deut).

²⁹ www.exministries.com

Because of *City of God City of Satan*, I will focus much of my ministry in Philly on the development of indigenous leadership development in the hip-hop generation. By God's grace, I would like for Epiphany Fellowship to live out Titus 1:5. Titus 1:5 is Paul's command to Titus to appoint leaders in each city that are from that particular city. Thus a main thrust of the book of Titus is that qualified leadership would be trained by the Apostolic Delegate, in order that they may relevantly lead the primary culture of Crete from a primary cultural perspective. Nonetheless, this perspective is to be informed by sound doctrine (Titus 1:9, 11; 2:1). In short, my desire is that I would have the same privilege as Titus. Epiphany Fellowship is currently emerging as a model of this nationally.

To Live in Peace³⁰

Most books speak of principles generally and you have a hard time connecting them to real life, but Mark Gornik does a masterful job of stirring theology, the city, and practice into a stew that is usable to develop in ministry in the city. Gornik's pastoral story of Sandtown in the inner-city of Baltimore speaks volumes towards God's work of redemption among the poor. Reading about the development of a community that is steeped in disenfranchisement experiencing the mercy of God was incredible. As a result, the picture of the kingdom of Christ through community revitalization was challenging and quite profound. Because I went to a dispensational school for my masters degree, I felt like I was taking some hermeneutical shots, but that is O.K. Recently, I consider myself a covenantal-dispensationalist. During the

³⁰ Mark R. Gornik, *To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002).

course of my reading, I was impressed with the author's theology and its close tie to his practice.

At certain points, it did feel like he was propagating a social gospel and not the gospel of the death, burial, and, resurrection of Christ that has social impact. Nevertheless, he made it clear that what he was promoting is a comprehensive view of kingdom impact through the gospel.

The two points that were most impacting, were the things that make for peace and leadership development. Seeking the *Shalom* of the city is a big vision, but when explained as *presence, peace, and public activity* it makes clear the mandate God gave to Israel in her captivity. Many of us read Jeremiah 29:11, but forget to read around the verse. Being in Philly planting a church in the northern sector of the city near Temple University, these three P's will help our team to develop a strategy for reaching the city. Our Vision statement is: comprehensively making disciples in a culturally relevant way to impact the culture for Christ's Glory. In addition, we desire to live out the Ephesians doxology given by Paul in Ephesians 3:20-21. We desire to see God impact north Philly and the world through a healthy Church that reflects the Glory of Christ in tangible ways. Gornik states, "Such an urban strategy was profoundly counter-intuitive; the Israelites were to practice their faith by blessing their enemies, defying their power by exceeding expectations for civic life."³¹ Engage the culture by showing exceptional service and concern as if you are indigenous to it.

Gornik's patience with the process of developing leaders is a model that is transferable to any context. In hip-hop culture, his work represents what is called

³¹ Mark Gornik, *To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner-city*, 104.

“keeping it real”. This means to practice what you preach. Much of the lyrics of current hip-hop culture are falsified. Fantasy drives much of the lyrics of songs, but every now and then, a story arise that can be authenticated. Recently, 50 Cent gained high marks of street credibility because he was shot 8 times, authenticating his place as a “true thug” or “true nigga”. However, when it was found that he had abandoned his neighborhood friends that he grew up with, he turned from a “true nigga” to a “fake nigga.” Some would read that and say both represent appalling euphemisms.

Gornik’s willingness to move into the city, even the neighborhood that he did not have to would garner deep respect from those of the hip-hop generation. This sort of paradoxical living would blow the mind of hip-hoppers. The reason is that the rappers and producers, who were in the hood, move out as things get better. However, to see people that do not have to make the socio-economic plunge raises an eyebrow. Moreover, this would make new icons for those in the hip-hop generation in the city. There are a multitude of hip-hop generationers in Philly. In addition, they are spread throughout a myriad of ethnicities. Epiphany already reflects this reality in those who attend now. We need to use the work in Sandtown as a model of how reduplication can happen among those indigenous to Philly. Sandtown is a model of how to parachute into the inner city and plant a church in general culture among the poor, whereas this work seeks to display what it looks like to do so with leadership development in hiphop culture as the main thrust. In short, Gornik illustrates well what it looks like to connect with an indigenous populous as a relocated leader and reproduce. That alone makes this book a key resource for reference and practice.

Urban Ministry³²

Much of this work takes notice of the history and philosophy of urban ministry. Although very theoretical, many would call this book the definitive work on the matter. Harvie Conn and Mannie Ortiz speak of three types of leaders, the indigenous leader, the multiethnic leader, and the relocated leader. The review at hand will focus on the relocated and indigenous leader. The relocated leader seems to go through a challenging struggle to contextualize, though the authors deem it possible. It does not get anymore relocated than this, but the Israelites are to settle into this strange land without settling into its evil influences; even the evil influences within the Jewish nation and to withdraw from the culture (Jeremiah). I have a passion for the Hip Hop Culture and have been called to engage them without getting engaged (marital) to it.

Of late, developing indigenous leadership has been an adopted concept in my view of urban ministry. I agree with the need to develop these types of leaders, but I believe that the inner-city is yet changing once more in its demographic. In that, urban renewal through the private and public sectors is causing blue, white, and no collared professionals to live in the same sector of the city. Although the poor are usually pushed out or shifted out of the city there is a unique interim. Washington, D.C. has been going through this for the last 10-15 years. Philly has yet to experience it. My fear is that the poor in our target area will be the victims of “urban renewal” that leaves them out of the vision for a renewed city. Their depravity is used as a vice to purchase land for cheap and over price it so that the rich can “renew” the city from

³²Harvie M. Conn and Manuel Ortiz. *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City & the People of God* (Downers Grove, ILL.: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

the outside in rather than the inside out. Since the plight of the city is ever changing the church must respond to this recycling travesty through beating the hirelings to the punch. That is, renovating souls that are motivated by the Person of Jesus Christ, His gospel, and His kingdom and that respond by becoming productive in presence, peace and public activity. They will be learning their spiritual and economic power is not a “wealth” principle, but God’s justice being expressed by their savvy of seeking the welfare of the city; rather than just getting by and living from day to day.

With reference to the relocated leader, hip-hop provides a natural connectivity between hip-hoppers from different parts of the country, even the world. Because of that, a hip-hopper relocating to another context can use the monoculture form to produce common ground for the gospel and leadership development. Although Philly and D.C. have different expressions of hip-hop culture, when planting in Philly, the transition was not as difficult. There just had to be adjustments in style of slang, understanding of the city, and attitudes towards Philly sports teams.

Seek the Peace of the City

*Seek the Peace of the City*³³ is a short, but a potent pill filled with several nutrients that will help in one’s development in urban ministry. Under the unit “Urban Socio-Theology,” I was encouraged. Scholarship in this section was put in its proper place. Based on my background educationally and theologically, I have felt like everyone exists to please scholars. Given that, the atmospheric feel of scholarship is that the academy stands in judgment of practice or ministry outside the classroom. To add, there are not many times when I felt the academy taking on an

³³ Eldin Villafañe, *Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1995).

attitude of service. However, this scholarly practitioner makes it clear that we exist to be vertically impacted by the transcendence and immanence of Christ, yet not forgetting the horizontal responsibility to our neighbor. Nevertheless, evangelicalism in America seems to have forgotten its heritage of fully keeping the *Shama*. The *Shama* is comprehensive, not compartmental. No doubt I have been challenged.

Despite the growing populations of ethnic minorities, a strategy to reach them has been ignored. Even if their presence is acknowledged, there is this condescending sense of “*let us get a little ministry going with those people down there*”. “Urban Ministry”, was the section in the text which surfaced the anguish involved in the above. Indigenous leadership development and contextualization has been the last thing in the thought of those of our host culture with a great desire to impact our cities. Unless control and “fathership” are involved, a lack of trust and entrustment (2Tim 2:2) of ministry is not in view. Many times when we go to minister to people we come in with an attitude of “I will show these people”, but true service places one in a mindset of lifetime teach-ability that will breed long-term results.

By far, the most riveting section of the book was “Urban Theological Education”. This unit presents a plan for educational revitalization for urban ministry. It approaches the current training structure as one dimensional and irrelevant. It reminds me of Jesus in Luke 16:8, “...for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light”. Most notably, this passage eggs the face of disciples who have a lack of understanding of its generation.

In addition, this lack of understanding leads to less eternal impact. The unbeliever knows how to use their generation for personal gain, but the sons of light are behind. For example, G-Unit is an arm of 50 Cent the rapper where he uses as a breeding ground for new artists to influence his generation. One of the most thought provoking pictures is of him, and the unit in Source, XXL, and Vibe Magazines, training kids from 10-18 years of age in his vices and milieu.

Perhaps the chapter that provoked me most philosophically was “theological education in the urban context”. Seeing the city as strategic has been a passion of mine for the last 10 years, but in the last year it has been under-girded by a biblical grid. God created the earth with cities in mind (Gen. 1:26-29) and He ends it in the same way (Rev. 21). As I am planting in Philadelphia, this same motif has permeated my philosophy of ministry and praxis. In short, the final paragraph of the chapter presents clearly the greatest struggle in the heart and mind of every young urban leader, Teach-ability. Being teachable helps us turn to the mercy of the Christ and His Holy Spirit to teach us as we go forth in urban ministry.

One paradigm that I am struggling with on several levels as it relates to urban ministry is the concept of “inner-city”. I tend to see urban ministry as much broader than the inner-cities and the central portions of cities. If we are going to learn and grow as Jesus commanded and as Paul did (Acts 17) we must broaden our view. Yes, we must minister to the neglected and the outcasts, but we must minister to all **θούσας** within the city. Even within a changing community we must endeavor in Christ’s missional plight for His name to be magnified among the nations. This work will aid in developing the systemic thinking of the urban leader through the use of *Shalom*.

Transforming the City

This work is the most phenomenal book written on the subject of urban education. Un-contextualized education is one of the most neglected aspects of the education process of developing and training leaders. The Majority Culture of American society assumes that everyone deals with the same contextual issues as they do. Therefore, seminary students from ethnic cultures have to “thaw out” from their seminary experiences once they complete it in order that they may be re-contextualized to their particular context. *Transforming the City*³⁴ speaks for the student that is not ever considered in the education process.

Urban theological education must take into account the changing cultural matrix. By this the authors give several academic scenarios where the professors enter into a mutual learning relationship with the students in order that they might learn what needs to be taught. The difficulty has been that most of these schools are connected to schools that are a part of a framework that attempts to put it into “Saul’s armor.” It is amazing that many Christian seminaries do not have a comprehensive understanding of education. Without a more comprehensive understanding of education the assumption will be that ethnic students cannot think.

Being a product of the Anglo, middle class, western approach to education, it has been a challenge reintroducing myself to my ministry context. Fundamentalism taught me that culture was bad and that all I needed was my exegetical tools. Not just verbally, but practically. At times you could feel that cultural experiences were seen as non-scholarly and primitive. In addition, as an African American student I felt like

³⁴ Eldin Villafañe, Bruce Jackson, Robert A. Evans, and Alice Frazer Evans. *Transforming the City: Reframing Education for Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002).

a second class student at times. On the other hand, this is precisely why The Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) has been a blessing to me, it is because I feel that here my understanding of the bible and culture matters. Not from the perspective of being a token, but a contributor, even peer. I have been encouraged through this process. In light of this I have begun to train the core group of the church that God has called me to plant in Philly. Our training involves the academic process and the missional process of understanding the contextual questions that the gospel is the answer to. Also, the education is happening in the context of the plant rather than in the suburbs, where we are sheltered from an unbiased exegesis of context.

Because of this training, our strategy of being a church planting church will be deeply influenced by leaders being students of their environment. It amazes me how many educators are oblivious to the reality of hip hop culture. Secular universities have responded by developing whole curricular around the subject so that students can engage this culture on several levels. The question on the floor is what are seminaries going to do, will they let this pass by or will they enlist students that are a product of this culture and ask that they would teach them how to teach them.

A Prayer for the City³⁵

The subject of Shalom is the sine quo non... of Dr. Eldin Villafane. Villafane seeks to apply the implications of a comprehensive understanding of *shalom* as the foundation for urban ministry in an ethnic urban context. One of the frustrations about most books is that they are geared towards a white understanding of culture.

³⁵ Eldin Villafañe, *A Prayer for the City: Further Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Austin, Texas: Libros AETH, 2001).

But the good Doctor seeks to revise the ethnic expression of the gospel in the city by the people who are usually overlooked for the gain of others. Villafane seeks to get Americans to embrace a more ethnically comprehensive understanding of education, one that includes those who are forced to study and receive a non-contextual education.

Balance is how this work can be described. Balance in the sense that theology is seen as a body of information and acting upon a more full-bodied understanding of its implications and a more diverse expression of it in other ethnic contexts. One must enjoy the author's passion for his countrymen. Accordingly, he peers into the music of Latino and Black culture and attempts to gather themes of redemption through them as common ground for the gospel. The cultural commonality between Blacks and Latinos stem from the social conditions in which both groups endure. However, both are colonized in their educational experience in urban theological education. There is a wealth of cultural roots that will aid these minority groups in the contextualization of the gospel, one that is many times lost in traditional theological education. Instead of the learning environments being brought to the classroom for examination and for its use in missions, it is ignored. The host culture assumes a mono-cultural expression of education that ignores the fact that the environment that Blacks and Hispanics are trained in is diametrically opposed to the one in which they return to live and minister.

The question is how minority ethnic groups can be considered in the formulation of theological curriculum and be viewed to be legitimate by the Anglo culture. Respect should be in a unified content and a multiplicity of forms. Function

having to do with how each group contextualizes the principles received from their education and forms having to do with a contextualized expression of the application of that education without changing the soundness of content. This is the prayer. That each ethnic group would learn from one another rather than the minority groups being forced into multiple consciousnesses. All groups grow when each mutually submit to one another in the education process and works through what each deals with in applying the bible to their particular indigenous group.

At the core of education is leadership development. Without it, one is a smart follower. One must be able to see the education that's being received in light of the context to be engaged. Although the education presented in the current text is contextually driven, it must also be used as a lever in the hand of a systemically thinking and acting leader. The organic nature of hip-hop culture allows for platforms of education to be broadened beyond the confines of the traditional classroom. In Chapter 5, we will explore the broader outlets for education in developing urban leaders in the context of hip-hop culture.

CHAPTER THREE

TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF URBAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE HIP-HOP GENERATION

As a student of the scripture and a student of the hip-hop culture and hip-hop's impact on vast urban cities, this work will reflect and fit the framework of this passion. Although, this paper will focus on a theology of peace, place, and prayer, it will be framed in a theology of leadership development in urban cites. Every movement, organization, and community has leadership whether it is formally or informally appointed. Hip-hop has played an enormous role in shaping the social ethos of youth, young adult, commercial, popular, and technological culture globally. However, it has been the least studied and engaged by the Christian community as a bridge for seeking the peace of cities. As we will see later, many think of the phenomenon as a youthful, African-American, and lower socioeconomic means of expression. Nevertheless it is much more. Therefore, the people of God must look at Hip-hop culture as a redeemable tool of engagement. If it is a redeemable tool of engagement, then the bible demands that we disciple indigenous people of this culture and mobilize them as leaders who can in turn go back into this culture and inject others with the gospel of the kingdom (2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:5).

The goal of this Chapter is to develop a viable theology of place, peace, and prayer³⁶, from the perspective of leadership development for the city, and to view leadership development through the lenses of hip-hop culture.

³⁶ This is from the second DMin residency which Dr. Villafane presents an outline of working through a theology of urban ministry. All information is found in the class notes.

A Theology of Place: The City as a Context of Urban Leadership Development

In Jeremiah 29, the prophet sends a letter to the elders, priests, prophets, and people taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar about their function in captivity. God wanted the exiles to understand that their presence in Babylon was invoked by Him and that the situation was under His Sovereign control. Elohim wanted it to remain inexplicably clear that He is the one who facilitated this plunder of Jerusalem. However, the question comes to mind, why would God send His people into a city that is the exact opposite of what Jerusalem is to represent? In Isaiah 47, Babylon is described as arrogant (v 6), ruthless (v 7), sexually greedy (v 8a), and demonic (v 9). With this in mind, how does the Lord of Hosts reconcile sending His people into such a socially, spiritually, and emotionally wrenching context? After all Isaiah prophesied their treatment. Although they were removed from the city of promise, God still calls them to represent Him in this complex and godless culture.

Even though, Jeremiah 29 is writing to Jews under the discipline of the Lord, their discipline was exile from Jerusalem not merely that they were in Babylon. Discipline was not a reason for further misrepresentation, but an opportunity for continuing to missionally engage the nations. Jeremiah's calling in chapter one reflects the philosophy found in chapter 29. Yahweh calls Jeremiah a prophet to the nations. How would he accomplish this prophetic calling through the exiles? His prophetic work to God's people would in some way reach the nations. Since Babylon had access to the known nations of its time, the people of God's presence in the great city would give them access to the nations.

Likewise God has commanded Christians to do likewise in the myriad of contexts in which we dwell (Matt 28:18-20). Our theology of place must be informed by Missio Dei, “The Mission of God.” One cannot explain a theology of place without a theology of purpose, informed by theology proper and Christology. Guder explains,

...mission is not merely the activity of the church. Rather, mission is a result of God’s initiative, rooted in God’s purposes to restore and heal creation. “mission” means “sending,” and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God’s action in human history. God’s mission began with the call of Israel to receive God’s blessings in order to bless the nations. God’s Mission unfolded in the history of God’s people across the centuries recorded in scripture, and it reached its revelatory climax in the incarnation of God’s work of salvation in Jesus ministering, crucified, and resurrected. God’s mission continued then in the sending of the Spirit to call forth and empower the church as the witness to God’s good news in Jesus Christ...it moves toward the promised consummation of God’s salvation in the eschaton.³⁷

I agree with Guder in part; however God’s mission predates history itself. God’s mission began with the eternal enjoyment of Himself (2Pet 1:3). It was then expressed through the creation of human beings who were to multiply the image of God through giving birth to children (Gen 1:26-28). We see it in God’s first act of redemption with Adam and Eve. We see the transcendent God showing Himself imminent when He ventures to the Garden of Eden and asks Adam, “Where are you?” Something happened where the omniscient God asks a question that points to the fact that man’s “context” or “place” had changed. To put it simply man changed from sinless to sinful. This shift was so powerful that it changed man’s context for the duration of human ages. In the midst of this change God acts as the first missionary

³⁷ Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending Church in North America* (Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1998), 4.

by going to man. Ultimately God clothed man with skin signifying the first act of redemption in human history, that points to ultimate redemption (Gen 3:15).

Although men multiplied, most of them are unredeemed. Consequently Christians are to understand and tackle the fallen contexts of planet earth with the gospel. Each city, town, and community must be studied for the purpose of engagement. 1 Chronicles 12:32 says, that the sons of Issachar were, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do.³⁸ The word “understood” is a *hendiadys*. *Yadah* (intimate knowledge) and *binah* (understand).³⁹ The sense is, from the sons of Issachar, “knowers of understanding” for times to know what Israel should do⁴⁰. They had an in-depth understanding of the context and the mission within that context. However, many Christians want to retreat from the city context which is most unaffected by the gospel. Yet without a viable Christian presence, *shalom* is a dream not a vision. Niebuhr adds,

With this understanding of the work of Christ and the works of man, Paul could not take the way of the radical Christian with his new Christian law by attempting to remove himself and other disciples out of the cultural world into an isolated community of the saved.⁴¹

Love for the City

What comes to mind when you hear the word city? If you ask different people, one will probably get a plethora of answers. Some hate the city and others love it. Both have their feelings for many reasons. However, some of the reasons are fair and others are not. For those who hate it, whether they are suburbanites who are

³⁸*New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update*, 1 Ch 12:32 (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

³⁹ □□□□ □ □□□□

⁴⁰Biblical Studies Press. *The NET Bible; Bible. English. NET Bible.*, Biblical Studies Press, 2003.

⁴¹H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ & Culture* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Books, 1951), 163.

former urbanites or have always lived in the plush landscape of the suburbs, some tend to feel like the city is evil. A number of people in Maryland and Virginia do not drive in Washington, D.C. because of their fear and disdain for it. On the other hand, you have those who have a love for the city in such a way that they will not like the slow pace of any other environment. Also, among those who love the city, many love it for the wrong reason. Their love is for the access to the systemic evil that lies within the city system. Others are just stimulated by the access to technology and advancement.

The urban leader must develop a Christ-centric love (*agape*) and view of the city. Not the city in and of itself, but the people within it. Jesus laments over Jerusalem,

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *the city* that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen *gathers* her brood under her wings, and you would not *have it!*⁴²

Although the context of His lament is for His messianic place within God's chosen city to eternally place His throne (2Sam 7:12-17), this passage illustrates the ultimate leader's passion for His city. A leader that lacks love for the city should get out of that city. In addition, the urban leader must not only see where the city is, but where it can be under the redemptive hand of Christ. Without love for one's place of ministry, it is difficult to bring the gospel in an incarnational way to it. Steve Sjogren in his book on *Community of Kindness* state much of the same,

I (Steve) had to transform myself into a true Cincinnatian instead of being a Californian who happened to be living in Cincinnati. There comes a time in you move to a city when you become a person of that city. If you believe that God has called you there, abandon your defenses and go ahead, love the

⁴²*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*, Lk 13:34. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995.

people and characteristics of your new community...I've met a lot of church planters who never mentally moved into their new city.⁴³

Therefore, the challenge must be to develop new eyes. The urban leader must have eyes that see a theology of the city from the scriptures, not an *eros*. If the leader does not develop a proper theology of context then the city will give he or she one. Having an *agape*' and a *phileo* for the city helps the urban leader to view the city from a redemptive standpoint. A proper love for the city married to a wealthy biblical theology of it enhances our ability to viably develop leaders in it

In Colossians 1:19-21, Paul unveils the mystery of comprehensive redemption. Christ has been given the job to reconcile all things to Himself. Moreover, this redemption includes eternal and temporal contexts. In that it includes cities. The church is supposed to be a sneak preview of ultimate redemption. Christ's bride is to be the agent by which the world sees signs of redemption. These signs of redemption give credibility to the message of the gospel. Our minds and hearts must be challenged with the question; can the gospel redeem this city? Paul says in 1Thes 1:5,

...for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.⁴⁴

Signs in the bible are usually (unless clarified) miraculous provisions from God through the hands of God's leaders (Jn 20:30; 2Cor 2:12; He 2:4) utilized to establish credibility and to authenticate that a message or person is from God (especially the

⁴³ Steve Sjogren and Rob Lewin, *Community of Kindness* (Regal Book: Ventura, Ca.2003), 65.

⁴⁴New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update, 1 Th 1:5. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995.

gospel). In John 14:12 Jesus affirms the fact that the ascension will allow for more to be done on a broader scale.

For many, our lack of love for the city shows its face in our attempt to use a picture from a more rural or suburban context as the standard for what needs to happen in the city. To read these values into the city is unfair and Pharisaic. In Mathew 23:15 Jesus condemned the missionary practices of the Pharisees because they saw themselves as the epitome of piety: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”⁴⁵ Linthicum helps us with this idea even further,

While we are rediscovering the city’s mission field and introductory an urban methodology, our biblical and theological reflection is limited. We enter the city equipped with an urban sociology and urban tools for ministry, but we carry with us the baggage of a theology designed in rural Europe. Even the very way we formulate theological questions and the frameworks we use to construct our theological thought have been forged from our rural past. What we are in need of is a theology as urban as our sociology and missiology---a theology, as Ray Bakke puts it, “as big as the city itself.”⁴⁶

The Church at Corinth, Hip-Hop Culture, and Philadelphia, Pa

Now, within a frame work for a theology of place or presence we move towards three cultural contexts which helps develop our theology of place. First, the Church at Corinth and our understanding of its social context will be vital in understanding striking parallels which we face in urban cities today. In addition, the church seems to bear some of the marks of immaturity as assessed by Paul in the first century.

⁴⁵ New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update. LaHabra, CA : The Lockman Foundation, 1995, S. Mt 23:15

⁴⁶ Robert C. Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan: A biblical Theology of the Urban Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 20.

Corinth was a planned community of sorts by Julius Caesar. This letter should be read against the background of Corinth as a city imbued with Roman cultural values.⁴⁷ Aulus Gellius claimed that colonies were “miniatures” of Rome. They were established to foster the majesty of Roman culture, religion, and values.⁴⁸ As a cosmopolitan city, Corinth was a religious melting pot with older and newer religions flourishing side by side.⁴⁹

Equally, Corinth like Rome had a form of thuggism that reared its face through power, ruthlessness, pride, and self-promotion. It was also known for its brash, fast paced social ethos which could be seen through its street entrepreneurialism. This entrepreneurialism was expressed through a lack of integrity. Much like American cities today, one can clearly see these ideals because someone is always selling something. Stands with goods that have been acquired through ill means are often seen today and in the Corinthian ethos. In today’s terminology we call it “bootlegged.”

Religious pluralism and tolerance. In Corinth, pragmatic pluralism made way for the tolerance of religions as long as they did not disturb the empiricism of Rome. This is why the gospel was such an offensive message. As Niebuhr puts it, “it seems impossible to remove the offense of Christ and His cross even by means of these accommodations; and cultural Christians share in the gospel limitation all Christianity encounters whether it fights or allies itself with the world.”⁵⁰ Placing the gospel in

⁴⁷ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI. 2003), 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 9.

⁵⁰ , H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ & Culture* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Books, 1951), 109.

the same place as other worldviews is like placing Muhammad Ali's legacy of greatness with Mike Tyson's view of greatness in the squared circle.

Social Lyricism. Corinth was a city where public boasting and self-promotion had become an art form.⁵¹ In short, a high view of the arts and consciousness used to convey human wisdom was the order of the day.

These are just some of the issues that the Corinthians dealt with in their context. With this in mind, no wonder the Corinthian church was plagued by such a mammoth of complex issues. In verses 4-8 of chapter 1 Paul acknowledges their spiritual giftedness and natural giftedness. However, he then rebukes their assimilation into the culture in which they were to relate the gospel. In Chapter 3:1-4, he then calls them immature. Therefore, you have extremely spiritually gifted people who are extremely immature and are of the society in a way that contradicts Christ's High Priestly prayer (John 17).

Leaders must be careful of allowing the context to compromise their witness. It is critical that we are incarnation of Christ's image and not that of the culture. Hence the American church is developing a watered down leader; a leader that is not trend setting as a missionary to the culture, but one who take his cues from the culture. Although we learn from our contexts how to minister in them, we must place everything under strict evaluation in order that we might reject that which is unredeemable.

⁵¹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 2000), 13.

Hip-hop is the on the throne of American pop culture as a missionary for capital gain. If urban leaders are going to be effective in an urban environment they must understand Hip-hop. Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson state much of the same,

Observing and studying hip-hop culture, the church, especially the African American church, will learn something it badly needs to grasp: in this post-soul culture there is a widening gap between African American culture and the church. Further, there is a widening gap between the urban church and its surrounding community. Over the last thirty years, has the church truly noticed and observed the evolution of an urban culture that is spiritual but in many ways has defined itself outside the church and Christianity? The hip-hop culture has been evolving not only outside the church, but also outside mainstream black political movements such as the civil rights movement...How many African Americans in the hip-hop generation has the church lost because it hasn't been paying attention to what is going on in the post-soul African American culture?⁵²

Whether one is a minority or a majority hip-hop must be understood. The church has neglected its place as a responsible missional community in having a vital effect on this international culture. However, the Nation of Islam sees its significance and uniquely targets hip-hop to continue its voice into the next generation. Edward "Sunez" Rodriguez of Source magazine states,

Throughout h Hip Hop's lifespan, the NOI have had a tremendous impact on everything from rap lyrics to the culture at large. In recent times, since the million man march and the murders of Tupac and Biggie, Farrakhan and the Nation's role in Hip Hop has become even more visible. In 1997, Farrakhan held a gathering of Hip Hop artists to discuss a truce, and in 2001, he called for *peace* and responsibility among rappers at the National Hip-Hop Summit in New York. In 2003, he once again tried to bring *peace* to the culture when he met with Ja Rule to aid in resolving the beef between Ja and 50 Cent. Now he continues his mission, asking the entire Hip Hop community to find *leaders among themselves* who will have a voice that truly resonates with the generation.⁵³

⁵² Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson, *The Hip-hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture*, (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2005), 54.

⁵³ Edward Rodriguez, *The Source Magazine: The NOI Legacy*, (November 2005), 71.

The heart of the church must go into spontaneous combustion when hearing our terminology used by those who are not of the redeemed community. Urban leaders must study the elements of hip hop, the icons of hip hop, and the apparel of hip hop for the purpose of developing a theology of place. In every major urban context hip hop is essentially the same, but is slightly expressed differently. For instance, east coast, west coast, and southern rap genres are expressed differently. If a hip hop artist claims to be indigenous of either of these, then one must bear the fundamental stylistic idiosyncrasies of that sector of the country. An urban leader must be aware of these when developing a theology of place.

Given these facts, the Hip Hop Generation must be engaged through strong young urban leaders developed in the local congregations. Bakari Kitwana places the ages of the hip hop generation between the years of 1965-1984.⁵⁴ It could be from 1960-1995 because many of the architects of hip hop span farther back and the generation after 1994 are still shaped by the philosophies espoused by hip hop. He describes the hip hop generation as those who were born after the civil rights era. In addition, this generation is made up of those whose icons are Tupac and Biggie rather than Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and John F. Kennedy.

Young Black Americans born during 1965-1984 are the first generation of Black Americans to come of age in the era of globalization.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, hip hop cannot be narrowed down to a black thing or a minority fixation. In fact, it unduly had an influence on white America. It has been a matter of debate the exact percentage, but it has been estimated that 70% of hip hop is bought by suburban

⁵⁴ Bakari Kitwana, *The Hip Hop Generation*. Basic Civitas Books, (New York, NY. 2002) xiii.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 12.

whites⁵⁶. Each continent has been in some way impacted by the art form that found its start in inner-city Bronx. Urban Leadership development has all but ignored this Hip Hop. Since God sent His Son into the world during a strategic time as a leader for His redemptive cause (Gal 4:4), so must the local Church do the same for urban leadership development.⁵⁷

For the study at hand, Philadelphia will act as the specific city of leadership development. Philadelphia is a strategic city for urban leadership development and influence in hip-hop culture⁵⁸. Philly is a city of firsts

- Philadelphia is home to the nation's first public grammar school, now known as the William Penn Charter School, founded in 1689.
- America's first life insurance company, The Presbyterian Minister's Fund, was opened in Philadelphia in 1717.
- America's first botanical garden, Bartram's Gardens, opened in 1728.
- Philadelphia is home to the nation's first public library - the Free Library of Philadelphia - founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1731.
- The first volunteer fire department, the Union Fire Company, was founded in Philadelphia in 1736 by Benjamin Franklin.
- The Pennsylvania Hospital, founded by Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Bond, opened its doors in 1751 - the first hospital in America. In addition, Philadelphia is home to the nation's first medical school, first children's hospital, first cancer hospital, first eye hospital, first nursing school and first dental school!
- The concept of lightning being electricity was discovered by Benjamin Franklin in 1752 when he was able to draw lightning from the clouds by means of a kite.

⁵⁶ Carl Bialik, *Is the Conventional Wisdom Correct In Measuring Hip-Hop Audience? Wall street Journal on line* (<http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB111521814339424546.html>).

⁵⁷ The Father sent Jesus Christ into a Hellenized middle east. Hellenism was a type of world culture that made way for there to be a common and connected sociology, language, economy, and geography which would make way for the spreading of the gospel.

⁵⁸ For More info see the appendix http://www.phillyhiphop.com/_history/phillytimeline.html

- The first flag of the United States was sewn in Philadelphia in 1777 by Betsy Ross.
- The first university in America, the University of Pennsylvania, founded in 1779, traces its roots to a tuition-free school founded in 1740.
- The Pennsylvania Bank, the first American public bank, opened in 1780. It was later renamed the Bank of North America, the first incorporated bank chartered by the Continental Congress.
- Philadelphia was the first capital of the United States from 1790 - 1800.
- The first stock exchange in the United States was the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, which organized in 1790.
- The first mint in the United States opened in Philadelphia in 1792. For the first time standardized coins were issued for the new nation.
- The first municipal water system in the country, the Philadelphia Water Works, began operation in 1799.
- The first art school and art museum in America, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, was founded in Philadelphia in 1805.
- The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, organized in 1827, is the oldest continually operating horticultural society in the United States. The Philadelphia Flower Show first held in 1829 and sponsored by the Society, was the first large flower show in the country.
- In 1874 the Philadelphia Zoo became the first zoo to open in the United States.
- The first World's Fair held in the new world was held in Philadelphia in 1876 to mark the centennial of the United States.
- The PSFS Building in downtown Philadelphia became the nation's first modern skyscraper (notably fully air-conditioned) when it opened its doors in 1932.
- The world's first computer, ENIAC, was built at the University of Pennsylvania in 1946.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ http://philadelphia.about.com/cs/history/a/philly_firsts.htm

Philadelphia is strategically located between Washington D. C. and New York. With these cities being within 2hrs driving distance from Philly and less than 30 minutes in flight, the access and influence for leadership development is endless.

The focus area is North Philadelphia near Temple University. This is the worst area of Philly. Part of this area has been branded “The Bad Lands”. Although this is the label, it has much potential to be a place of peace. Here is some information on a portion of the target population.

FAITH INVOLVEMENT INDICATOR

Estimated 2005 Households Likely to Be:

- Strongly Involved with Their Faith 48.6% 35.4% 137
- Somewhat Involved with Their Faith 30.6% 29.9% 103
- Not Involved with Their Faith 21.7% 34.7% 62

Estimated 2005 Households Likely to Have:

- Increased Their Involvement with Their Faith in the Last 10 Years 24.4% 22.1% 110
- Decreased Their Involvement with Their Faith in the Last 10 Years 21.5% 23.7% 91

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE INDICATOR

Estimated 2005 Households Likely to Prefer:

- Adventist 0.6% 0.5% 125
- Baptist 17.1% 16.1% 106
- Catholic 27.1% 23.7% 115
- Congregational 0.8% 2.0% 39
- Eastern Religions (Buddhist/Hindu/Shinto/Islam) 0.8% 0.4% 175
- Episcopal 3.3% 2.9% 113
- Holiness 1.1% 0.8% 137
- Jehovah’s Witnesses 2.2% 1.1% 208
- Judaism 3.3% 3.2% 106
- Lutheran 5.1% 7.2% 70
- Methodist 11.1% 10.1% 111
- Mormon 0.2% 1.8% 10
- New Age 0.3% 0.6% 46
- Non-Denominational / Independent 4.0% 6.9% 58
- Orthodox 0.6% 0.3% 200
- Pentecostal 2.9% 2.4% 118
- Presbyterian / Reformed 5.2% 4.6% 114
- Unitarian / Universalist 0.6% 0.7% 81
- Interested but No Preference 3.1% 3.9% 81

- Not Interested and No Preference 7.2% 11.1% 65
- Likely to Have Changed Their Preference in the Last 10 Years 15.4% 16.8% 92

LEADERSHIP PREFERENCE INDICATOR

Estimated 2005 Households Likely to Prefer A Leader Who:

- Tells them what to do 3.7% 4.0% 93
- Lets them do what they want and is supportive 11.4% 11.7% 97
- Lets them do what they want and stays out of the way 6.2% 4.8% 129
- Works with them on deciding what to do and helps them do it 78.7% 79.6% 99

Population In Group Quarters By Type 6,104

- Institutions 1,555 25.5% 52.2% 49
- College Dorm 2,895 47.4% 26.5% 179
- Military 0 0.0% 4.6% 0
- Shelter/Street (category eliminated in 2000) 0 0.0% 0.0% 100
- Other 1,654 27.1% 16.7% 162

RACE/ETHNICITY

Population By Race/Ethnicity 105,405

- White (Non-Hispanic) 5,114 4.9% 69.1% 7
- African-American (Non-Hisp) 79,366 75.3% 12.0% 629
- Hispanic/Latino 18,773 17.8% 12.5% 142
- Native American (Non-Hisp) 182 0.2% 0.7% 23
- Asian (Non-Hisp) 912 0.9% 3.6% 24
- Hawaiian & Pacific Islander (Non-Hisp) 10 0.0% 0.1% 8
- Other Races & Multiple Races (Non-Hisp) 1,177 1.1% 1.9% 58
- Asian Population By Race 927
- Chinese 253 27.3% 22.6% 121
- Japanese 22 2.4% 7.8% 31
- Indian 197 21.3% 16.4% 130
- Korean 76 8.2% 10.5% 78
- Vietnamese 75 8.1% 11.0% 74
- Other Asian Races 304 32.8% 31.8% 103
- Hispanic/Latino Population By Race 18,773
- White 4,418 23.5% 47.8% 49
- African-American 1,340 7.1% 1.9% 384
- Native American 83 0.4% 1.0% 44
- Asian 15 0.1% 0.3% 27
- Other Races & Multiple Races 12,917 68.8% 49.0% 140
- Hispanic/Latino Population By Origin 18,773
- Mexican 477 2.5% 58.6% 4
- Puerto Rican 16,219 86.4% 9.7% 894
- Cuban 173 0.9% 3.5% 26
- Other Hispanic Origin 2,662 14.2% 28.4% 50

MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status All Persons 15 and Older 77,535

- Single (Never Married) 39,389 50.8% 27.1% 188
- Married 23,112 29.8% 56.5% 53
- Divorced/Widowed 15,034 19.4% 16.4% 118
- Marital Status Females 15 and Older 44,433
- Single (Never Married) 21,839 49.2% 24.1% 204
- Married 11,934 26.9% 54.6% 49
- Divorced/Widowed 10,660 24.0% 21.3% 113
- Marital Status Males 15 and Older 33,102
- Single (Never Married) 17,550 53.0% 30.3% 175
- Married 11,178 33.8% 58.6% 58
- Divorced/Widowed 4,374 13.2% 11.2% 118

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Households By Type 35,768

- Single Male 4,706 13.2% 11.0% 120
- Single Female 6,052 16.9% 14.8% 114
- Married Couple 6,770 18.9% 52.5% 36
- Other Family - Male Head of Household 2,568 7.2% 4.1% 176
- Other Family - Female Head of Household 13,826 38.7% 11.8% 326
- Non Family - Male Head of Household 843 2.4% 3.4% 70
- Non Family - Female Head of Household 1,004 2.8% 2.4% 118
- Households With Children 0 to 18 15,019
- Married Couple Family 3,600 24.0% 68.9% 35
- Other Family - Male Head of Household 1,325 8.8% 6.8% 130
- Other Family - Female Head of Household 9,939 66.2% 23.2% 285
- Non Family 155 1.0% 1.1% 96

Population By Household Type 105,833

- Family Households 83,728 79.1% 82.2% 96
- Non Family Households 16,001 15.1% 15.0% 101
- Group Quarters 6,104 5.8% 2.8% 209⁶⁰

The above is a basic sample summary of the context for urban leadership development.

A Theology of Peace: The City and the Ministry of the Urban Leader

Shalom the center piece of the gospel. Without Shalom or the hope of it the universe is doomed to a murky end and human and damned to a Christ-less eternity.

⁶⁰ 1990-2005 Percept Group, Inc. Sources: Percept, Claritas, U.S. Census Bureau

A theology of peace arms the urban leader with the strategies necessary to play a role in fulfilling God's passage for actual redemption of all levels. However, it is impossible to speak of peace without a working definition of it.

What is Peace?

Shalom in the full sense means wholeness or complete. In addition, "Peace," in this case, means much more than mere absence of war. Rather, the root meaning of the verb *šālēm* better expresses the true concept of *šālōm*. Completeness, wholeness, harmony, fulfillment, are closer to the meaning. Implicit in *šālōm* is the idea of unimpaired relationships with others and fulfillment in one's undertakings.⁶¹ Linthicum adds, "Shalom is a comprehensive word not easily translated into English, because our word peace is inadequate. The idea encompasses the manifold relationships of our daily life...shalom is a state of wholeness and completeness possessed by a person or a group that includes good health, prosperity, security, justice, and deep spiritual contentment."⁶² *eirēnē* has the same basic meaning as in *shalom*, but Kittle speaks of three general uses in keeping with *shalom*: εἰρήνη in its widest sense as the normal state of all things (1Cor 14:33)⁶³, εἰρήνη as the eschatological salvation of the whole man (Luke 19:42)⁶⁴, εἰρήνη as peace with God (Rom 5:1), and εἰρήνη of men with one another (Rom 12:18). Ultimately, Jesus is the

⁶¹R. Laird Harris and Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. electronic ed, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999, c1980), 931

⁶² Robert Linthicum, (*City of God, City of Satan*), 86.

⁶³*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. Edited by Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. electronic ed., Vol. 2, Page 412. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976.

⁶⁴*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. Edited by Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. electronic ed., Vol. 2, Page 412. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976.

source and inaugurator of peace (Rom 5:1). Jesus is the possessor of peace therefore His to govern how it is used (John 14:27).

A Theology of the Gospel for Urban Leadership Development: Kerygma

Since the gospel is peace (Eph 4:15), then the gospel must not be compartmentalized into one linear, western, American category. The gospel encompasses all of the Messianic promises of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:17-21). Therefore, urban leaders must understand the extent of the Gospel if they are going to seek the peace of the city. A constricted Gospel will lead to constricted peace, but comprehensive Gospel, leads to comprehensive peace.

Jesus reads out of Isaiah 61:1-2a in Luke 4 what becomes the layout and subject purpose statement of his earthly ministry. There are several elements to this passage. They are proclamation, physical and spiritual freedom, renewed sight (the ability to see things from God's perspective John 9), release from the oppression of sin,⁶⁵ and forgiveness from the debt of sin forever. This is the Gospel! Whereas, we must proclaim the gospel, yet we must continue to live out all of its implications. Urban leaders who are armed with the entire Gospel are able to do ministry that flows out of a philosophy of the Gospel.

Now the leader must determine how the gospel speaks to the particular urban context. It is paramount that the gospel does not change, but its wrapping will.

Indigenous leaders who receive these principles are quickly able to apply the gospel to their context. Linthicum states,

How does Nehemiah empower the people of Jerusalem so that they can solve their own deteriorating situation?

- Allowed their plight to burn into His own soul to such a degree that he is obsessed with bringing about their empowerment.
- Networked with the people in order to ascertain what they perceive as their city's most urgent and immediate issues.
- Personally researched the situation to determine the accuracy of both his perception and the people's perception of their most urgent issue.
- Challenged and inspired the people to take charge of their own situation⁶⁶

Narrative preaching has found a resurrection in the times of late. Proclaiming God's the truth through story is a powerful tactic for the hip-hop generation. R. Kelly a hip-hop soul artist recently had a song told in story form and placed into video format called, "Trapped in the Closet". It was a success! However this is not new! The bible has been telling the truth through story ever sense the writing of Genesis and in the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles. Postmodernism has caused the Church to examine its proclamation forms and in some sad cases function. By form we focus on the nature of its presentation, but by function means the orthodoxy in which the form is loaded to present. The more didactic or linear form of presentation is the less effective it is contextually conveyed to this generation. Therefore, the function or content does not change, but the form must be challenged. Charles Kraft asserts,

Beneath the vast array of differences between human cultures lies an equally impressive substratum of basic human similarity. The Scriptures as well as the behavioral sciences assume this similarity. The study of humanity within western culture, however, has tended to identify many specifically western cultural traits as basic human characteristics.

Western logic was considered to be proper logic and those who do not think in our way were said to be "pre-logical," "pre-scientific," or possessed of a "primitive mentality". Western Christians often saw such divergence from

⁶⁶ Robert C. Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan: A biblical Theology of the Urban Church*, 205.

“normality” as the result of unchecked sin in these other cultures. If such peoples were to be won to Christ, they would first need to be “civilized” in order to be evangelized⁶⁷

Many feel that same way in Christendom about hip-hop, however our desire is through the preaching of the word in an ever developing cultural form to see the same results of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of this culture as would be expected in any culture (1Tim 1:5; Col 1:28). At Epiphany Fellowship our teaching team teaches in narrative-exegetical-expository-contextual format. There is a merge that is being made between tradition forms of communication, with that of contextual forms. Each of the above plays a unique role in our presentation, in that they remain faithful to the truth of the bible and remain faith to the voice of our audience. This process is a process. Therefore, we are in an every state of learning the art and science of communicating to the hip-hop generation.

From Missions Mindedness to a Missional Lifestyle

Missions must not merely be done, but it must be embodied in the personality and ministry of the leader and the community of faith that one is on mission with. The urban leader must enter a lifelong journey of learning how to minister the peace of the Gospel to one’s context. As stated earlier, mission is not what we do, but who we are as God’s covenant community. The key to our understanding of this lies in Jeremiah 29 where Judah is to continue its representation of Yahweh in this foreign context. Although they are not in the land of promise they are to be missionaries to Babylon by adapting to the construct of the new society without being assimilated into it. Redemption is the order of the day. Seeking the Peace of the city is not much

⁶⁷ Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A study in the Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books 1979), 81.

different than looking at the city redemptively. Even in the passage at hand, Jeremiah speaks to the people of God concerning that which is redeemable in Babylon.

Similarly, in Colossians 1:20-21, Paul expresses Christ's interest in all redeemable creation. To reconcile means the restoration of a relationship of peace which has been disturbed⁶⁸ or to restore and reinstitute a thing to its former condition. As we look at applying the gospel comprehensively, we see similarities between the missional identity of Israel and that of Christ through the church.

In representing the reign of Christ the church must proclaim an already and not yet kingdom. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He prayed about a kingdom that represents the hope for the full manifestation of God's promised rule⁶⁹. In other words the Gospel has future and present implications. If the Gospel effects the now, then how do we appropriately apply it to the now since all of Christ reign will not be realized now? The two vital keys to leaders who want to seek the peace of the city are twofold: presence and proclamation. Verses 5-6 of Jeremiah 29 are a theology of presence. No one can proclaim where they are not located. Therefore, presence is of vital importance if the gospel is going to be incarnate in one's missions' ground. Also, proclamation must inform why we are present in the city. If we do not proclaim Jesus, then we become a bunch of social activist without a greater cause, the gospel. However, if we are marked by the Gospel being the why of our doing, then comprehensive redemption is the order of the day. Roman 10:14 makes it clear, *How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they*

⁶⁸Spiros Zodhiates,. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. electronic ed., (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992), G604

⁶⁹Biblical Studies Press. *The NET Bible; Bible. English. NET Bible.*, Biblical Studies Press, 2003; 2003.

*believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?*⁷⁰ On the other hand, Colossians 4:2-6 points to the rules of engagement,

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

6 Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.⁷¹

These together make for a lifestyle of engagement of God's Mission in that church as an identity. In addition, Acts 2:41-47, illustrates the church living out its missional identity in such a way that it culminated in people coming to Christ in faith.

Likewise, today's leader within the church must be an example of this by not compartmentalizing one's life, but rather embodying *Mission Dei*. The repeating of the Shama in the NT expresses every level of Impact in which God wants to have on us and our context. ***YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.***⁷² Every part of us is to love the Lord. To add to it we are to express this same love for others.

Contextualization and Leadership Development

Without contextualization, the leader will be stuck in a stalemate in his or her ability to impact any particular context. The Gospel must be proclaimed in the language of the culture in which one is ministering. Initially, when we hear this

⁷⁰ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*, Ro 10:14. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, Col 4:2.

⁷² *Ibid*.

terminology, many assume compromise, but contextualization merely gift wraps the gospel, not change the content of it. Dr. Villafane⁷³ states, Contextualization implies that the urban program is situated—both administratively and programmatically—in the context of ministry⁷³... One would add situated missionally in the context of ministry; meaning how leaders are trained in their lifestyle of administering the gospel in their context of ministry. Ideally, the leader best qualified to apply this is the homogeneous leader. Specifically, one who was effected by the gospel and not deprogrammed (through colonization) of the intricacies and the complexity of one's cultural context. However, this leader is highly trained in what God redeems from their culture and what He does not. Acts 14:21-23 shows how this process looks from beginning to end. Paul and his leadership development team preached, made disciples, strengthened, and encouraged, homogeneous leaders. Upon completion, they appointed elders (from among them) and commended them to the Lord. There was an expectation for the Gospel to be understood and applied appropriately to their people. What is key here is that Paul dealt with the nutrients of the Gospel not contextualization. It was left up to the elders to apply it appropriately. In addition, Paul did not bring Jerusalem culture into the picture. That is why there was so much commotion when they returned to Jerusalem. Contextualization for the leader is being entrusted with the competence of appropriately applying the gospel to the environment that he or she is most familiar with. Contextualization is an art and science that must be carefully crafted for the particular Gornik eloquently states it,

...because the city belongs to God, Christians will draw ideas, practices, and perspectives from a variety of sources, including the perspective just sketched. Re-creating community is part of our shared creational identity. Therefore,

⁷³ Eldin Villafane, *Seek the Peace of the City* (W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1995), 82.

Christian theory and practice are not to be isolated from the field, although they must be discerning and at times stand in vivid contrast to it, especially when it comes to practices that support displacement and marginalization.⁷⁴

Contextualization as it relates to the Christian gospel must be meticulously finding a voice for the gospel through the ministry of the leader. Without a voice (Preacher) how will they hear? In short, Jesus must be preached. He must be lifted high. Our leaders must be careful of attempting to take the confrontation and offense out of the Gospel. We must not allow our pursuit of what we believe to be the ideal and cause the content of the Gospel to be compromised. Because of this, the leader must be in a constant state of learning that evaluates how the gospel is preached and applied to one's context.

A Theology of Worship for Urban Leadership Development: Leitourgia

People who preach or speak of John 4:21-24 speak of worship in terms of music or a worship service. Christ seeks to move the Samaritan woman from seeing worship as merely an act to an identity. Jesus speaks of leitourgia as $\square\lambda\eta\thetaivo\square$ προσκυνητα \square , true worshippers. The expression means within the context those who are authentically changed and have the right information. Spirit and truth have been under interpreted. Spirit means those who have been born again and given right relationship with God. This interpretation feeds off the usage of Christ's conversation with Nicodemus in the previous chapter (...born of water and the Spirit 3:5). John Piper speaks powerfully of the distinction,

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exist because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the

⁷⁴ Mark Gornik, *To Live at Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City*, 129.

redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.⁷⁵

Piper masterfully explains the theology of worship as an eternal identity of the Church. Worship has to do with a lifestyle marked by reverence to God in every area of life. Every leader must grapple with the issue of reverence. One's theology of worship can liberate or enslave. Worship in the context of John 4 challenges us to draw from Jesus Christ as the ultimate quencher of our needs on every level (John 4:13). Therefore, music and services are only a consummation of a commonly held identity within the context of community that is shared by the church. The leader must live a life of worship in which God's peace marks it in such a way that even in the midst of a perverse cultural context there is a distinction between the worshipper and the non-worshipper. Although worship is a lifestyle, it also is the perpetual act of celebrating it as a lifestyle with other Christians. Paul talks about New Testament worship,

19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;⁷⁶

16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.⁷⁷

Craig Keener comments,

Both Greeks and Jews commonly believed that music could come by inspiration, an idea that appears in the Old Testament as well. Paul emphasizes the kind of worship that Jewish people celebrated in the temple

⁷⁵ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad* (Baker Books, 1993), 11.

⁷⁶ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*. LaHabra, CA : The Lockman Foundation, 1995, S.

Eph 5:19

⁷⁷ Ibid. Col 3:16

(e.g., psalms and hymns); we cannot be sure whether most other Jewish gatherings, such as those in synagogues, included the singing of psalms and hymns in this period. “Spiritual songs” probably refers to Spirit-inspired songs (cf. 1 Chron 25:1–6), possibly spontaneous, which would clearly distinguish Christian worship from nearly all worship in antiquity (cf. 1 Cor 14:15).⁷⁸

Psalms here probably point to the book of Psalms and Hymns to those embedded in scriptural passages. However, it is not limited to them. Therefore, the saints probably wrote contextual songs that were inherently embedded with biblical truth, but was esthetically familiar to the body. Redeemed music must be used by the urban leader to provoke the body to walk as Spirit-filled worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Team Leadership: Koinonia

Many leaders are isolated. Whether because of intimidation by the lead or by purpose, an isolated leader is like a time bomb, at some point it will blow. Team leadership has been the topic of much discussion as of late. Leadership is not the task of an individual, but of a community of qualified individuals that play their role in taking the initiative to lead in expressing God’s Mission. Rick Warren was speaking at a Pastors lunch recently where he spoke of “Global Giants”. As a result of conversing with leaders around the word, he constantly heard the same issues that transcended contexts. One of them in particular is of great interest to this work; that issue is “ego-centric leadership.” Although every leader must carry the baton of a vision from God, one must recognize that no vision will come to pass without a team to help refine and flesh that vision out. A team should be comprised of those who

⁷⁸ Keener, Craig S.; InterVarsity Press: *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 1993, S. Eph 5:19

have differing areas of focus and strength that allow the greater good to flourish within their *shared care*.

Theologically, the Trinity has implications in the area of team ministry. Although, each member of the God head is self- sufficient, each chooses to play a distinct role for the other yet working towards the same purpose. Ephesians 1:1-14, displays the position each member of the Godhead plays on their unified team. If they choose to work as a team, how much more do we need to do so in our human limitations? God communes with Himself, therefore we must commune with Him and one another (John 17).

In the context of the city, it is imperative that team leadership is applied. Leadership must lead in community and learn in community. When Jesus taught His disciples, He for the most part did not teach individual leaders, but a community of leaders. In particular, they had a three year runway as a foundation for their responsibility to build the church. Each learned from the others mistakes and was able to develop the church as a reflection of their leadership community (Acts 1-2).

There are several areas which are crucial to developing a strong leadership community. First, trust is the bedrock of any relationship. Without trust every act of each member is suspect and bureaucracy reigns, rather than the kingdom agenda. Second, shared vision allows each to have the same mental picture of what the future will look like, but will be able to play their distinct role in bringing that picture into fruition. Finally, shared values are those components which act as guidelines for or behind the philosophy behind the vision. Core values are another way of stating it. Competing values lead to mistrust. Before anyone enters into a relationship for the

purpose of co-laboring, one must first speak of philosophy of ministry. There will be no *shalom* among those led if the leadership is not experiencing *shalom*.

Much of hip-hop culture has thrived off of the principle of community. Although it was not a biblical one, it would be powerful to see the gospel inform existing organic networks of hip-hop relationship to get redeemed. From break dancing crews, production teams, small time record labels with street credibility, and open mike nights see the redemptive collective of missional hip-hop Christians. Instead of Christian hip-hoppers merely looking for the dangerous opportunity to get a record deal with a non-Christian label or just looking for a record deal, they should develop *koinonia* networks. Paul speaks to the Corinthian Church about the key of utilizing the promised blessing of the dwelling of God among His gathered people,

14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

17 “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; and I will welcome you.

18 “And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.⁷⁹

This is not to promote a separatist’s philosophy of ministry, but a distinct city within a city.

Mercy Me: Diakonia

Some years ago the late Marvin Gaye wrote and produced a song called “Mercy Me”. This song seemed to be the summary of the outcries of a culture in

⁷⁹ New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update. (LaHabra, CA : The Lockman Foundation, 1995, S. 2) Co 6:14.

distress. "Mercy Me" is also known as his eulogy. This LP was on the sound track "What's Going On". He wanted to make a social statement that I believe many heard and enjoyed, but did not listen to.

Mercy Mercy Me

Oo oo aa mercy mercy me

Ah things ain't what they used to be no no

Where did all the blue skies go

Poison is the wind that blows from the north and south and east.

Oh mercy mercy me

Ah things ain't the way they used to be

What about this overcrowded land

How much more abuse from man can she stand

Oh na na my sweet Lord

No no na na na

My, my Lord, my sweet Lord...

"What's Going On"

Mother, mother

There's too many of you crying

Brother, brother, brother

There's far too many of you dying

You know we've got to find a way

To bring some lovin' here today – Ya...⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Hitsville USA (Studio A), Hitsville West, June 1970 ("What's Going On"), March - April 1971 (remainder of album)

These songs spoke on everything from environmental issues, war, to issues concerning the poor. Jesus had several outcries for mercy to His generation that lead to His seeming demise. □λεος, one of the most intricate words in the new testament vocabulary. Seldom used out of the mouth of the Lord, but when it came out it rang with an understanding of the true meaning of commitment to God.

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus exhorts the leaders of the Jews to do some in-depth exegetical work on Hosea 6:6. In Hosea 6:6, Yahweh rings down judgment on His people. *Chesed* is the word being used in that passage. This word means unfailing love kindness, loyalty, or mercy. In the latter case, Yahweh confronts Judah and Ephraim's lack of loyalty to Him. Similarly, Jesus speaks candidly to the leadership of His day about their view of His relationship to the poor as a lack of loyalty to God. In the mind of the Lord, loyalty is more than ceremonial acts of obedience. Therefore, in the mind of Christ if they were walking loyally before God, then they would have understood these acts of mercy. Through this instance and several others Jesus pioneered the ministry of mercy. Keller describes the ministry of mercy as "...the meeting of felt needs through deeds. As agent of the kingdom, the church seeks to bring substantial healing of the effects of sin in all areas of life, including psychological, social, economic, and physical."⁸¹

Leadership must have a deep understanding of mercy. It is no coincidence that when Jesus mentions the word mercy that he speaks of it in the presence of leaders. In the case of the "Good Samaritan," Jesus was speaking to the disciples and some "innocent bystanders". The Christ framed the parable in such a relevant and out

⁸¹ Timothy Keller, *Ministry of Mercy* (P & R Publishing, 1989), 45.

of the box way to His audience by placing the Samaritan and the theology of the law in a complementary relationship. The expert in the Law had to admit the summation of Jesus' parable with the word mercy. Even on the Cross, Jesus cried out for mercy towards those whom He tried tirelessly to do mercy and justice for. At the core of an urban leader is Christ's philosophy and lifestyle of justice. Like the Good Samaritan the Minister of Mercy must be willing to feel compassion, give care, and give cash. In short, the urban leader must think and act comprehensively. Since Christ will reconcile all things to Himself and we are ambassadors to that eschatological reality, we must seek to see redemption through Christ in every facet.

Hip-hop has a saying that has been the object of t-shirt slogans and controversy, "Stop Snitchin". Snitching is a slang term that means, "don't testify against someone who is guilty". The honor system predates the hip-hop generation, yet it has become a hallmark of its role in relationships. Because many inner-cities have been the recipient of injustice, the only place where hip-hoppers (whether criminal or not, guilty or not) feel as if they hold power is with their mouth. Even though they may not have money to help someone with bail, their mouth is the last frontier of justice, although sometimes not snitchin could cause an injustice.

Produced by veteran hiphop journalist Carlito Rodriguez, "Season of the Snitch" takes off from a number of recent cases involving such high-profile stars as Lil Kim, Busta Rhymes, and Cam'ron, all of whom refused to cooperate with investigations into violent crimes to which they were witnesses. This same "no snitching" policy has helped to ensure that the murders of Tupac Shakur, Biggie Smalls, and Jam Master Jay remain unsolved. As the report puts is: "The Golden Rule of the criminal class has become our generation's all-out prohibition against talking to the police."

"Season of the Snitch" delves into the deep roots of the black community's distrust of the police. It also notes the hiphop generation's adoption of the Mafia's code of omerta -- and the linked belief that snitching is a "career

killer" for rappers. "Just get on the {witness} stand and the hood will label you a snitch - - plain and simple," according to Biggie's old associate Lil Cease.

Some hip-hoppers find this attitude absurd. "Stop snitching on who?" wonders the rapper Saigon. "If we wasn't killin' each other, we wouldn't have anything to snitch about."⁸²

Urban leaders must learn how to navigate the spoken and unspoken codes of the city, in order that God's truth won't be violated, but credibility with man won't be lost. Jesus in John 8 is asked a question about a woman caught in adultery, whether she should be stoned or not. If Jesus says yes, He violates Roman law and is condemned. If He says no, then He would violate God's law (in the mind of His adversaries). Jesus masterfully appeases both by stating, "He who is without sin, cast the first stone." Whether it was the sin of adultery or the witness violation laws, (Ex 23) they left. What a skill to be developed by the urban leader in the hip-hop generation?

A Theology of Prayer: The City and Spiritual Formation of the Urban Leader

How fitting it is to end the last section speaking on issues of loyalty to Christ. What spells loyalty more than that of one's spiritual vitality? It is quite ironic that in Jeremiah 29:7 that the people of God are commanded to "pray to the Lord on its (the city's) behalf." It sounds like an easy enough task, but in taking a more empathetic standpoint it might not be so. A Monarchical Governmental system sweeps into your land and pillages it, carries off your leaders, destroys everything that makes your country a valid nation, and you are commanded to pray. What a command! However this command would be more credulous in the eyes of one who understands God's way of thinking and God's way of doing things. From verses 8-10 Jeremiah warns

⁸² <http://www.tupac-online.com/News/0-261709-00.html>

God's people of not understanding His will in this situation. Since God commanded them to be in this foreign land on account of their unfaithfulness to Him, they are in His will. Although they are under God's discipline, they are still responsible to walk in right relationship with Him. Linthicum further aids in the contextual significance of this passage by calling it an urban promise.⁸³

The Furnace and the Urban Leadership: the Shaping of Godly Character

By far the most critical aspect to leadership, but seldom discussed is character. Leaders tend to be driven people who focus on their competence and commitment, but rarely character. Character is that which gives our skills and passion weight. Where else is the urban leader more shaped in one's character than in the furnace of trials? Any leader who has led anything or anyone will (if they are honest) speak of their journey through trials. Peter instructs the leaders in Asia Minor. In 1 Peter 5 he continues his theme of suffering and applies it to the context of church leadership. However, prior to this chapter the section is prefaced with a litany of verses on suffering. Peter and James agree that trials take on a multiplicity of variations (James 1:2; 1Peter 1:6). The word various can have very different meanings: many-colored,⁸⁴. Therefore trials look differently from place to place and season to season, but the issue is that there will be trials. Consequently they can take on the form of everything from sickness, spiritual warfare, injustice, racism, high rent and mortgage, and much more. With this in mind, the urban leader must be unduly prepared for these obvious obstacles. One must not enter the urban scene with their "eyes wide shut", if not the

⁸³ Robert C Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan*, 147.

⁸⁴ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. Edited by Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. electronic ed., Vol. 6, Page 484. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976.

disappointment will set into the heart of the leader. It all is boiled down to unbiblically informed expectations. Yancey states “disappointment occurs when the actual experience of something falls short of what is anticipated.”⁸⁵

Whenever a leader takes the journey of urban leadership development (especially among the poor), one will be affected but what the poor are affected by. The leader will go into the urban environment and believe that they are there for the people, but time will quickly teach that God has them in the city for themselves. Job’s life is not an isolated incident. His cry of innocence was the outcry of a man unlearned in his blind spots. Blind spots can only be revealed when one is outside of their comfort zone and in a situation out of their control. When these blind spot are brought to surface the leader must not enter into self-righteous denial, but humbly repent and fall on the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, which will shape their character in this or other particular areas.

Power, Sex, & Greed: The Leader’s Kryptonite

Urban contexts have been the “hot-bed” for some of the most heinous of sin. On some levels it acts as a breeding ground to much of what causes one’s character to spiritually decline.

There are various altars of worship within hip-hop. There is the altar of sensuality and sexuality of marriage. There is the altar of “bling-bling,” with many creative and evolving ways to wear jewelry. There is the altar of pimped-out ride with rims. There is the altar of fashion. There is the altar of being the best emcee. There is an altar of spirituality in hip-hop as well. There are many altars within hip-hop.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Phillip Yancey, *Disappointment with God* (Zondervan, 1988), 9.

⁸⁶ Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson, (*The Hip-hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture*), 55

With the rise of Hip-hop culture, there is grave need for leaders who have been redeemed to influence it more than just in form, but in character. Not to promote moralism, but to give the specific areas that seemed to be most prevalent in effecting the effectiveness of urban leaders. Even in the book of Acts, the Jerusalem council sent out a letter to the gentile churches which entailed items that were systemic to them being missional witnesses and was vital to their spiritual development as Christians.

Power. Although there are many other elements of hip-hop, this caricature value seems to be enjoyed by the poor, rich, urban, suburban, ex-urban, and rural alike. If the urban leader is not laced with Christ's view of power their leadership will only be an opportunity to cloak a gentile ruler's philosophy of leadership in the garb of Christian care. This can take on the form of getting grants that are not used for the expressed purpose in which they were gained, to seeing one's status among the poor as an opportunity for exploitation. Is 3:13-15 expresses God's heart for the poor who experience injustice,^{3:13} *The LORD takes his position to judge; he stands up to pass sentence on his people.*^{3:14} *The LORD comes to pronounce judgment on the leaders of his people and their officials. He says, "It is you who have ruined the vineyard. You have stashed in your houses what you have stolen from the poor.*^{3:15} *Why do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?" The sovereign LORD who leads armies has spoken.*⁸⁷ The urban leader must see to it that they stand as an example of servant leadership and walk in the example of Christ as a caring shepherd (John 10, 13; Ezek 34). Many urban leaders must even shun some rightful fruits of

⁸⁷Biblical Studies Press. *The NET Bible; Bible. English. NET Bible.*, Is 3:13-15, Biblical Studies Press, 2003; 2003.

labor in order that they might shine as an enduring example of Christ incarnation, and as an example to waive away some deserving suspicion (1Cor 9:1-17).

Sex. No issue is spoken of in the New Testament more than sex. One of the most potent forms of weakness for leadership is sexual immorality. Sexual sin has sunk a pantheon of ministries that it is impossible to count. Although every context deals with this issue, urban areas are infested with opportunities for sexual sin. Any urban leader living in any type of urban area knows well the hardship of remaining sexually pure. Wife or no wife, husband or no husband, it is a struggle, especially for men. Low rider jeans, magazines, malls, basic to full cable, university areas, billboards, videos, churches, subways, coffee shops, street corners, corner stores, and many other places. If any urban leader wants to loose their missional witness fast, sexual sin is a quick fast and a hurry way for this to happen. Unredeemed Hip-hop culture has played a major role in raising the next generation in a context smitten by sexual impurity. This generation is being socialized and taught sensuality through hip-hop media. BET and MTV are their leaders and pastors. BET has even developed a show called BET Uncut⁸⁸ that comes on this channel late at night. Moreover this show is an expression of uncut versions of songs through visual media.

⁸⁸ BET UNCUT: Corporate Communications

Sexy, seductive, steamy, provocative and controversial can barely describe UNCUT, BET's late night over the top adult program. Aired in the wee hours of the morning, UNCUT was created specifically for mature viewers who enjoy raw, erotic, and mind-blowing entertainment. See your favorite hip-hop and R&B artists in a different light as they bring out their freaky renditions of videos that you will never see aired during normal BET viewing hours. Multi-platinum recording artists Nelly, Lenny Kravitz, 50 cent and Ludacris have all created videos exclusively for the UNCUT viewer. This sixty-minute 'raunch' fest gives the late night crowd an option to view deliberate "un-sanitized" videos by mainstream and unsigned artists alike. UNCUT is solely adult entertainment-NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN

Therefore, the urban leader must submit to the power of Christ in order that the legacy of fallen leaders in this area might cease. A thorough understanding of 1Corinthians 6:12-20 and 1Thessalonians 4:3-8 most be a part of one's arsenal.

Richard Baxter in his classic work *The Reformed Pastor* drives this point home,

Take heed to yourselves, lest your example contradict you doctrine, and lest you lay such stumbling-blocks before the blind, as may be the occasion of their ruin; lest you unsay with your lives, what you say with your tongues; an be the greatest hinderers of the success of your own labors...⁸⁹

Greed. In the Bling Bling culture of diamonds, Cadillacs, and “the Fabulous Life of⁹⁰”, there must be leaders who draw the line. Many preachers have laced the gospel with a theology of greed. Yes, the gospel does speak to economics, but it does not promise wealth. As stated earlier, Paul seems to relinquish his rights to even the basic economic benefits afforded any servant of Christ who labors well for the gospel. We do not see leaders who seek to amplify their voice for the Gospel by walking counter culturally in the area of finances. Rick Warren has in many ways helped the cause of the Gospel through his efforts to dispel these myths through modesty. Here is Warren’s philosophy,

Kay and I became reverse tithers. When we got married 30 years ago, we began titheing 10%. Each year we would raise our tithe 1% to stretch our faith: 11% the first year, 12% the second year, 13% the third year. Every time I give, it breaks the grip of materialism in my life. Every time I give, it makes me more like Jesus. Every time I give, my heart grows bigger. And so now, we give away 90% and we live on 10%. That was actually the easy part, what to do with the money--just give it away, because I'm storing up treasures in heaven.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (The Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA, 1656), 63.

⁹⁰ VH1 Show about the rich and famous.

⁹¹ http://www.beliefnet.com/story/177/story_17718_2.html?rnd=6

How convicting is this example? No matter what anyone thinks of him, this is sacrificial leadership. Furthermore, Paul speaks to Timothy in 1Timothy 6 about fleeing greed. Every urban leader must be viewed by those they are leading as a giver rather than a taker. Many urbanites, especially the poor, view leaders (especially non-indigenous) as conspirators who keep them down and need to be viewed with suspicion. Whereas in many cases they are correct. With this in mind, the urban leader must be on guard.

Summary

In light of the theology espoused in this chapter, it must be understood that leaders must be theologians. Unless the urban leader is progressively growing theologically, distractions can overtake one's ability to have clarity of focus in developing leaders. Moreover, a growing number of Christian hip-hoppers have become consumed with frustrations with the church and have begun to get used to the cultural distance that the church keeps between itself and the culture. Therefore, several artists and leaders have placed all of their energy into Para-church ventures which does not offer itself to synchronized impact of the body of Christ and cities. Many are theologically strong, but need do theology in community that allows for the pitfalls if individualistic secular hip-hop to be kept in check with those who have commonality of purpose (Phil 2). Not the traditional and legalistic church that has caused frustration, but communities of the Christian faith that understand the unique role redemption play in raising up leaders.

CHAPTER FOUR
PROJECT DESIGN

Methodology: Hexagon Exercise

At this point we will look more intently into the area of leadership development. The next pages will layout the overall process of gathering and synthesizing information collected from those directly involved with Fellowship Associates (FA) in its quest to develop leaders. The writer of the following work will be used as the subject, since he was trained by a church based leadership program. This program will be used as a model by which a contextual urban leadership program for the hip-hop generation can be developed. The question that was presented was: "How to encourage pastors to intentionally develop strong urban leaders for the 21 century?"

As a point of prefacing, this section of research will layout a model of leadership development that will be tweaked and contextualized for leadership development for the hip-hop generation in Philadelphia, Pa through Epiphany Fellowship. The author's journey (as a hip-hop generationer) will be used in how he was trained by FA and developed as a leader for church planting. In relation to clarity, the author will show how this has been contextualized for the hip-hop generation. Because of the hip-hop generation's format of developing leaders, there are many similarities between FA and the development of hip-hop artists.⁹² There will not be a direct parallel made, but the point is that contextualization of the principles found will be used in developing leaders at Epiphany Fellowship Church in Philadelphia, PA.

⁹² <http://www.grandhustle.com/artisti.htm>. artists are developed and brought under the wing of the a lead artist who has lead in sales and popularity. Others are given the ability to take advantage of the platform of the main artist by being signed to a subsidiary label owned by the platinum selling artist. On the street level, artists being signed must prove themselves by street credibility that shows sales potential before being taken public. Therefore, the host artist develops them in their artistry before a massive investment is place in a recording contract.

The question was posed to Steve Snyder (president of FA), Robert Lewis (Head of the Board at FA and former Directional Leader of Fellowship Bible Church), Bill Wells (Board member at FA and teaching pastor at Fellowship Bible Church), Tim Wagner (Fellowship Resident), Shannon Nielson (Fellowship Resident), Thien Doan (Fellowship Resident), Paul Flemming (Fellowship Resident), and Hunter Beaumont (Fellowship Resident).

Table 2. Hexagon Question

<i>How to encourage pastors to intentionally develop strong urban leaders for the 21st Century?</i>
See the need*
Know it is the most strategic thing to work on*
Must believe it is the key*
Must intentionally plan to resource*
Don't be limited to a specific model*
Customize to fit the church and location*
Use seminaries to identify potentials*
Show success stories*
Recognize the loss of momentum in US churches*
Must be willing to be outward focused*
Build something the lasts beyond you*
Strategically encourage godly leaders leading healthy churches *
Partner with other churches*

Network with pastors that are doing it*
Redefine the church's understanding of leadership*
Confront hierarchical forms of leadership*
Model leadership*
Develop apprenticeships*
Leadership must own it*
Leadership must envision it*
Include it every year*
Be honest about where you think it should go*
Share the responsibility with others in your church*
Read*
Build it into what you are already doing*
You can include it in staff position*
Start small*
Go deep*
Think big*
Be simple*
Be honest about success and failures*
Develop a relational network*
Share with the church the commissioned leader's accomplishments*
Develop models*
Facilitate roundtrips to Churches doing it*

Develop a profile for potentials*
Cultivate natural leader into spiritual leaders*
Challenge young men who are leaders to go into ministry*
Send leaders to seminary, train them upon return, and release them to lead somewhere*
Financially support*
Plant at least one church with a strong leader*
Understand the biblical basis*
Recognize that didactic teaching is not leadership, but only one component*
Show where you are doing it and how*
Propagate the idea while developing leaders *
Release leaders to lead*
Find them and develop them*
Develop a clear plan*
Have conferences*
Develop a mentoring culture in the church*
Make an ongoing list of godly business leaders to help*
Encourage theological training*
You must be developing*
Be available*
Celebrate completion of training before the Church*
Gear it towards church size*

Recognize that your life gets better as you give it away*

Table 3. Hindrance Question

Possible hindrances to hexagon clusters in response to the question: “How To Encourage Pastors To Intentionally Develop Strong Urban Leaders For the 21st Century?”
Hindrances to encouraging pastors to develop strong urban leaders for the 21 century:
Bad leader (s) corrupting good potential leader(s) _*
Transferred bad habits*
Money, Time, Effective resources*
Traditionalistic paradigms*
Easy not to do it, than to do it*
Ineffective connections with younger generations*
Young leaders shy away from old school leaders*
Entertainment culture in America*
Lack the Philosophy of ministry for it*
Never see as profitable*
Overwhelmed by present issues*
Limited view of missions (local, national, and international) and the kingdom*
Competition and turf issues*
Does not want to invest in things which have not immediate return*
Unwilling to share failures and struggles*
Trust issues*

Pastors don't have a model for reproducing themselves*
Church see themselves as ends unto themselves*
Does not cross their minds*
My church mindset*
See leadership development as a loss and not a gain*
Many Pastors have a survival instinct, just make it*
No vision *
Does not see the church as the central training entity*
It is handed over to Para- church organizations*
Do not see the need*
Teachers and preachers are developing leaders rather than leaders developing leaders*
Pride*
Potential leaders not teachable*
Lack of vision for the city*
Conservatives gave up on the city*
The disconnection between seminaries and Churches*
Not modeled*
Ideology without philosophy*
Inability to identify potentials*
Degree focused in selection*
Laziness*

Table 4.1 Hexagon Clusters

Hexagon clusters in response to the question: “How To Encourage Pastors To Intentionally Develop Strong Urban Leaders For the 21st Century?”

Group 1: Develop A Biblical Basis And Cast Vision
1. See the need
2. Know it is the most strategic thing to work on
3. Must believe it is the key
4. Must intentionally plan to resource
9. Recognize the loss of momentum in US churches
10. Must be willing to be outward focused
11. Build something the lasts beyond you
20. Leadership must envision it
22. Be honest about where you think it should go
24. Read
42. Understand the biblical basis
49. Have conferences
57. Recognize that your life gets better as you give it away

Group 2: Resource and Strategize the Leadership Program
5. Don't be limited to a specific model
6. Customize to fit the church and location
8. Show success stories
12. Strategically encourage godly leaders leading healthy churches
15. Redefine the church's understanding of leadership
16. Confront hierarchical forms of leadership
17. Model leadership
18. Develop apprenticeships
21. Include it every year
25. Build it into what you are already doing
26. You can include it in staff position
27. Start small
28. Go deep
29. Think Big
31. Be honest about success and failures
34. Develop models
35. Facilitate roundtrips to Churches doing it
36 Develop a profile for potentials
37. Cultivate natural leader into spiritual leaders
39. Send leaders to seminary, train them upon return, and release them to lead somewhere
40. Financially support
41. Plant at least one church with a strong leader
43. Recognize that didactic teaching is not leadership, but only one component
44. Show where you are doing it and how

45. Propagate the idea while developing leaders
46. Release leaders to lead
48. Develop a clear plan
50. Develop a mentoring culture in the church

Group 3: Identify and Train Potential Leaders
7. Use seminaries to identify potentials
38. Challenge young men who are leaders to go into ministry
47. Find them and develop them

Group 4: Partner with Others
13. Partner with other churches
14. Network with pastors that are doing it
19. Leadership must own it
23. Share the responsibility with others in your church
32. Develop a relational network

Group 5: Commission Leaders that Complete the Training
8. Show success stories
33. Share with the church the commissioned leader's accomplishments
55. Celebrate completion of training before the Church

Table 4.2 Hexagon Clusters

Hindrance clusters in response to the question: “How To Encourage Pastors To Intentionally Develop Strong Urban Leaders For the 21st Century?”

Group 1: Unhealthy Practices
1. Bad leader (s) corrupting good potential leader (s)
2. Transferred bad habits
16. Trust issues
13. Competition and turf issues
15. Unwilling to share failures and struggles
28. Pride
29. Potential leaders not teachable

Group 2: Generational and Cultural Gap
4. Traditionalistic paradigms
6. Ineffective connections with younger generations
7. Young leaders shy away from old school leaders

8. Entertainment culture in America

Group 3: Not Viewed As A Priority

- 3. Money, Time, Effective resources
- 5. Easy not to do it, than to do it
- 11. Overwhelmed by present issues
- 17. Pastors don't have a model for reproducing themselves
- 22. Many Pastors have a survival instinct, just make it
- 33. Not modeled
- 35. Inability to identify potentials

Group 4: Lack of Vision and Biblical Perspective

- 9. Lack the Philosophy of ministry for it
- 10. Must be willing to be outward focused
- 12. Limited view of missions (local, national, and international) and the kingdom
- 14. Does not want to invest in things which have not immediate return
- 18. Church see themselves as ends unto themselves
- 19. Does not cross their minds
- 20. My church mindset
- 21. See leadership development as a loss and not a gain
- 23. No vision
- 24. Does not see the church as the central training entity
- 26 Do not see the need
- 27. Teachers and preachers are developing leaders rather than leaders developing leaders
- 30. Lack of vision for the city
- 34. Ideology without philosophy
- 36. Degree focused in selection

Group 5: Passivity

- 25. It is handed over to Para church organizations
- 31. Conservatives gave up on the city
- 32. The disconnection between seminaries and Churches
- 37. Laziness

Illustration 1

Grouping of the Causal Loop

**Develop A Biblical Basis
And Cast Vision**



Partner with Others



Illustration 2

Grouping of Initial Hindrance Loop

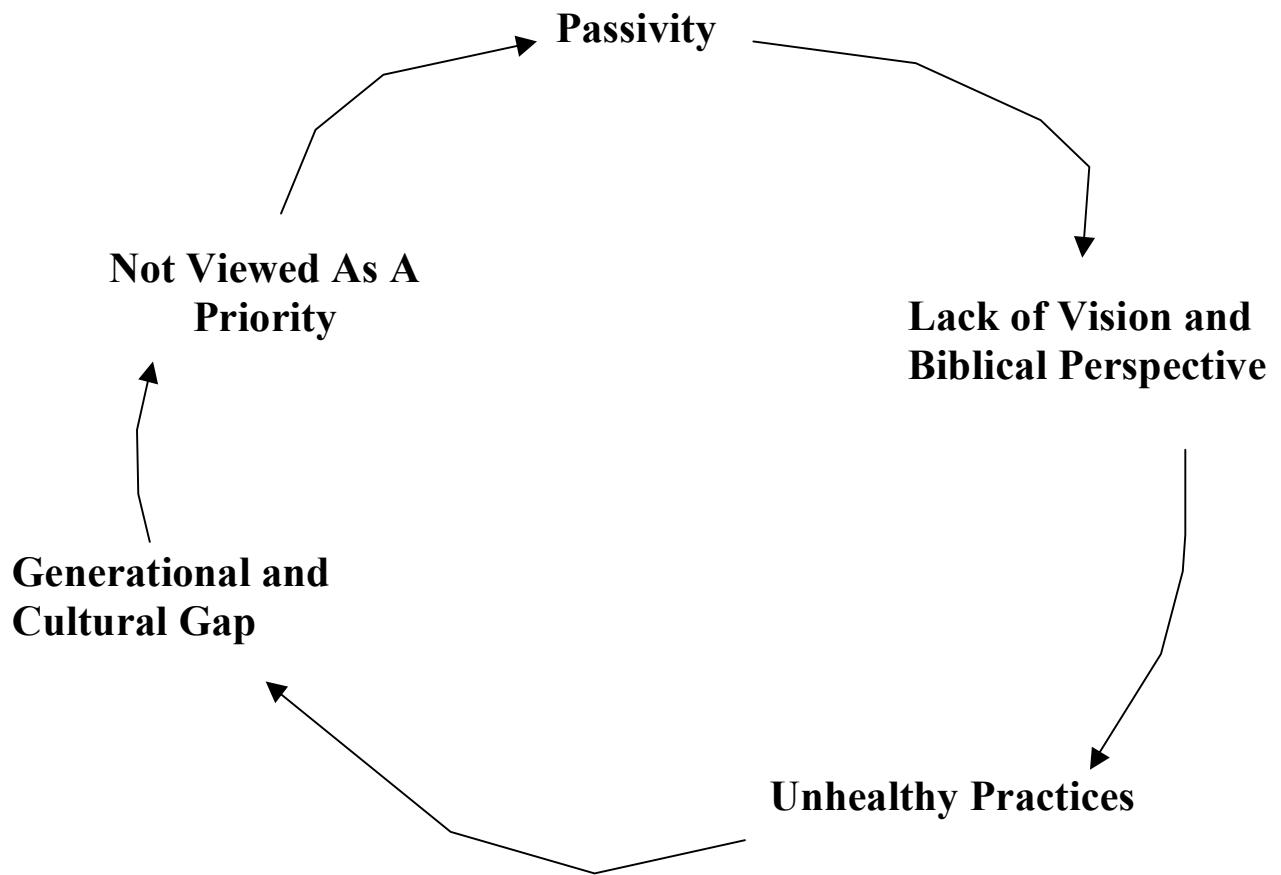
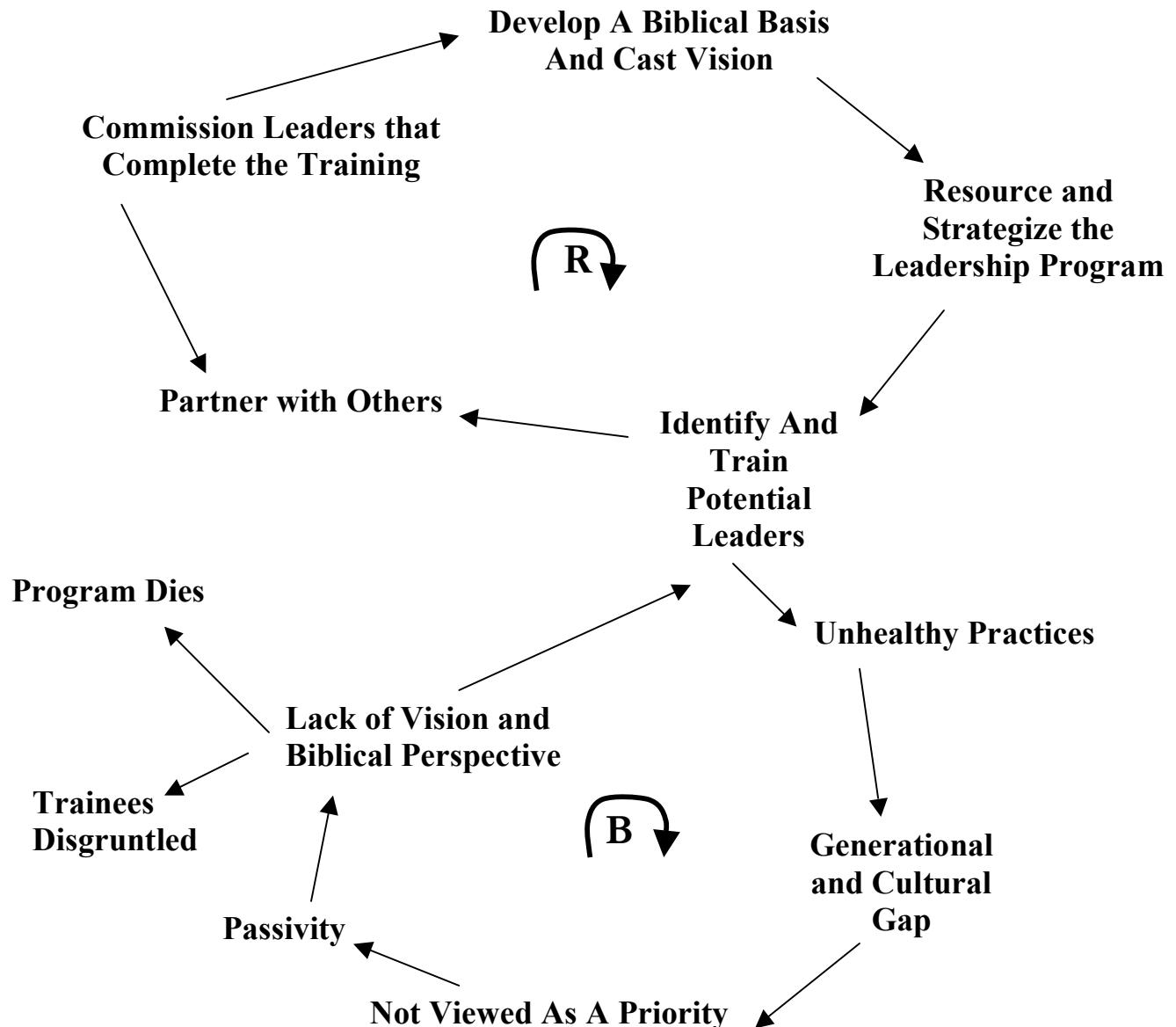


Illustration 3

Various Interactions and Interrelations



A Leadership Narrative:

The following narrative is a fictional description of the facts gathered from leaders and trainees in the Fellowship Associates Leadership residency program.

This story begins with a leader who has a group of young adult men who are on fire for God in the Church that he is pasturing in a large urban U.S. city. Because the needs in the city are so great, he begins to see a need for sharing some of his leadership responsibilities. Therefore, he develops a biblical basis for raising up leaders within his flock. Once he has completed what he believes is a biblical basis for leadership development, he ventures into ways in which he can share it with the flock. Since he does a state of the Church address each August, he decides that this is the best venue to cast vision to the congregation concerning developing strong urban leaders for the 21st Century.

After casting the vision for the monumental task, he then identifies and begins to train three young men who stand out to him as potential leaders. In light of the modest success of the program, several other leaders within the city become aware of this pastor's program. Consequently, these other pastors desire to link up with him in this great quest. This came as a pleasant surprise because he was seeking opportunities to partner with others since his vision is for global urban ministry.

When he has finished the training process he commissions leaders that complete the program. They are free to go out and lead in a capacity in which has been affirmed through the program.

In a world that has consequences based on a fallen world system, there are several realities which must be faced in a less than ideal reality. In view of the above scenario, there are a number of hindrances which can enter into the equation to thwart such a powerful and effective strategy.

First, in the process of implementation, the trainer (s) can veer away from what is on paper and enter into many unhealthy practices. These unhealthy practices stem from a fear of starting such a program or in doing, so the leader defaults to what is familiar.

Second, in most cases the leader who is to train others is usually older than those whom he is training. As a result, a generational and cultural gap causes a chasm between the leader and the trainee.

At this point, it seems exhausting to both parties to interact and the program is not viewed as a priority because no one is willing to deal with the brutal facts. Passivity sets in the leader, leading to a lack of vision for success. In the end, either the trainee is disgruntled or the program ultimately dies.

A Biblical Reflection: The Story of Paul and Timothy

Paul's relationship with Timothy bears striking similarities to the narrative story above. In Acts 16, we see the saints in Derbe and Lystra identify Timothy as a faith follower of Christ. Because of his enormous reputation in several cities, the apostle deems Timothy fit to join him on his missionary journeys (16:1-3). Paul entered this scenario with a vision and a strategy for leadership development because of how he was mentored (9:23-31, 13:1-15:35).

The apostle had a partnership with Silas and Luke which helped him share the responsibility of training this young missionary of the field (16:4-24). Throughout the program that Paul had, he placed Timothy in on the job training to develop him into a strong urban leader for the 1st Century church. As Paul gained more confidence in Timothy, he left him in Berea with Silas. The text does not make it clear what the men were engaged in upon Paul's departure. As it relates to the apostles latter practices, it is safe to say that they were left to do some pulmonary discipleship with the new believers there in Berea (Titus 1:5).

Later in Acts 19, Paul comes to the upper country of Ephesus and ministers to the saints there. Timothy is left once more (19:22) and this time takes the lead as a minister in Asia. Timothy's responsibilities increase as he has been in Paul's leadership training program which proved useful to the development of many.

Eventually, Timothy is left alone in Ephesus (1Tim 1:3). Paul has come near the end of his life and sees fit to deem Timothy an apostolic delegate. Since the Apostle is in prison and unable to come to him, he trusts the investment that he made in the young urban leader. So much so that he is given some level of Paul's exercise in his absence.

As clearly seen in the life of Paul and Timothy, the process extracted from the hexagoning exercise is contained descriptively in scripture. Although it is not prescriptive in Acts, 2 Timothy 2:2 capsules the concept.

The believing Jews' relationship to the believing Gentiles shares some of the negative implications the hindrances expressed. In Acts 15 the believing Jews reject the spiritual development of the Gentiles by wanting to place upon them unhealthy

requirements based on an unhealthy view of the law (15:9-10). These requirements were thought to be an issue because of the cultural gap that existed between the two groups. Acts 6 illustrates the lack of priority and passivity that can result from the inherent gaps in relationships. Jews of a different culture were being neglected because of one group's comfort with Greek culture. Both scenarios ultimately lacked a biblical perspective and vision (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).

Hindrances and Leverage Systemic Thinking in Urban Leadership Development

Having a Broader View of “Urban”

In interacting with many leaders on the subject of “urban,” one of the most difficult issues to work through is their understanding of the word urban. When most leaders during this study hear the word “urban” these are the words that come to mind: poor, black, Hispanic, inner-city, disenfranchisement, ghetto, high crime rate, deep social needs, democratic, and intellectually ignorant. Everything, but the word strategic was brought up in the conversations. Prior to this study an assumptive view of the city was the last mindset one would expect to surface. Because of this understanding of the city, seeing urban leadership development as a need would be thwarted by their mental models. The leadership residency program at Fellowship Associates (FA) is so beyond its time and thinking, that it seems preposterous to evaluate a program of its kind.

Fellowship Bible Church (FBC) is the church structure that houses FA. Both work in a strategic partnership to develop these leaders. Those who are accepted in the residency are given the opportunity to learn all the inner workings of FBC. Most of the churches that FA planted have been in rural or suburban areas. Not

intentionally though. FBC does not have a focus area for where they would like to send leaders. Residents who enter the program are allowed to make a conscious decision on where they would like to go. What has been unique about FBC is the health that has been reproduced in each church planted. Each church functions on the principles of team leadership, shared vision, irresistible community influence, the doing of theology, the priority of men's fraternity, and remaining in a constant state of learning. Thus, these principles on which this network is based make it a candidate for developing strong urban leaders. There were six residents in the FA class during my residency.. Each leader is planting a church outside the Bible belt and most in a complex urban setting in the U.S. The cities are: Portland OR, Lake Arbor Michigan, West LA CA, Long Beach CA, Denver CO, and Philadelphia PA.

God not only thinks systemically, He creates opportunities for His people to take advantage of systemic situations to further His redemptive program on earth. In Galatians 4:4-5 Paul drives this point home, *But when the appropriate time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we may be adopted as sons with full rights.* Although this text is explicitly expressing God's redemptive plan of adopting the Galatians into His Divine family, it implies how God went about it systemically. God the Father utilized mass urbanization as one of the factors in which He Sovereignly decided to send His Son. Keener comments,

Jewish texts often speak of the fulfillment of appointed times in history as a way of recognizing God's perfect wisdom in and sovereignty over history.

(Some commentators have compared “the fullness of the time”—NASB—to how ripe Greco-Roman culture was for the spread of Christianity⁹³

Campbell adds,

But . . . God marks the fact that divine intervention brought hope and freedom to mankind. As a human father chose the time for his child to become an adult son, so the heavenly Father chose the time for the coming of Christ to make provision for people’s transition from bondage under Law to spiritual sonship. This “time” was when the Roman civilization had brought peace and a road system which facilitated travel; when the Grecian civilization provided a language which was adopted as the *lingua franca* of the empire; when the Jews had proclaimed monotheism and the messianic hope in the synagogues of the Mediterranean world. It was then that God sent His Son, the preexistent One, out of heaven and to earth on a mission.⁹⁴

Wuest also states,

...the Roman Empire maintained world peace. Roman roads made travel for missionaries easy. The universal use of the Greek language made the speedy propagation of the gospel possible. The earth-stage was all set for the greatest event in the history of the human race, the incarnation, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection of God the Son.⁹⁵

Therefore, it is overwhelmingly evident that God views urbanization as a major springboard for His divine plans. The major question on the table is whether or not the Church will view it in the same light

The Importance of Indigenous Leadership Development

One of the most overlooked facets of leadership and church planting is that of indigenous leadership development. Since church planting by Americans among Americans is perceived as a non-cross-cultural plight, many assumptions are made that lead to many unneeded pit falls. Although this might seem a bit overstated it is

⁹³C. S. Keener, *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament* (InterVarsity Press Downers Grove, Ill 1993).

⁹⁴J. F Walvoord and R. B Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton, IL, Logos.

⁹⁵Wuest, K. S. 1997, c1984. *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Logos.

true. Seminary training, demographic studied, and successful models (from other contexts) are the main vises used in church planting. Each one of these is important in their own right and can be helpful as merely a segment of preparation for leadership and church planting. When anyone was not socialized in a particular area of this country or any context, there are certain unwritten rules and values which are deeply imbedded into the nurture of that particular people group. This is called culture. Moreover, even within the same city one can see clearly distinct cultural values. For example, in an inner-city area of city loud sounds such as music, talking, or kids playing outside is viewed as a normal part of that culture. In an upscale area of town these same elements are seen as a disturbance or even a threat. Due to the nature of these differences, several components must be taken into account. The most prominent issues to have in mind are understanding the social differences and focusing on how to develop in light of those differences. Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz state,

The critical impact that context has on leadership requires that we distinguish three kinds of urban leaders...The first has to do with those who enter the urban community from a distinctly different environment and culture, such as rural or suburban context. This type we call *relocated leaders*...In this respect they are foreign missionaries, but they serve much closer to their home context.

The second kind are *indigenous leaders*, those who have grown up in the city and belong to a particular culture...When we speak of indigenous leadership, we mean those who have been raised in an urban (any) context in a particular cultural and sociological milieu, who consider this context their own, psychologically and sociologically. Indigenous leaders find the city home.

The last type of leader is found in a multiethnic milieu, working alongside other leaders in a local church. We will call this a *multiethnic leader*.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Harvie M. Conn and Manuel Ortiz, *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City, & the People of God*, 379-381.

These Scholarly practitioners do a masterful job at expressing this point, yet it would behoove us to look at the eternal blueprint for further basis.

Paul displayed great wisdom in his usage and development of indigenous leadership for his plight to impact Gentiles in Urban cities (particularly those of Greco-Roman influence). Based on the recommendation of the saints, Paul enlisted a half Jew half Greek young man by the name of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:15). Timothy's exposure to both Greek and Jewish culture made him a key commodity for ministering to the Jew and the Greek. When Paul's Jewishness became an obstacle to the Gospel, Timothy could bridge that gap well (Acts 17:12-15). Titus served as an example of intentional indigenous leadership development when commanded by Paul "to appoint elders in every city" ... (Titus 1:5)

A More Clearly Defined Biblical Theology of Team Leadership

Obviously team leadership makes pragmatic sense in relation to the sharing of a workload, but in order for it to be fully owned as a valued principle, a biblical foundation must be laid. Although I believe that the leadership at FBC and FA has biblical reasoning for teaching team leadership, the theological foundation was not laid. A more philosophical and pragmatic one was laid. Therefore, one who is seeking to be biblical is left to cut and paste scriptures to principles given. The "how" makes sense when the "why" has been dealt with first. This is important because team leadership is an unwritten core value in this system.

The Need for Development and Maintenance of a Healthy Spiritual Life

Each resident has mentioned the desire to be challenged more in the area of spiritual development. There seems to be a great focus on the task of leadership

rather than on the character of the leader. Personal mastery must be the beginning point of how a leader leads. Paul exhorts Timothy in this very vein when he says, “Pay close attention to yourself and your doctrine...” (1Timothy 4:16a). Roger S. Greenway passionately labors this point,

Trouble with the traditional way of training for the ministry (leadership) is that it is so heavily weighed toward academic accomplishments that the “weightier things,” such as diligence in prayer, evidence of a loving and gracious spirit; obedience to moral standards of Christian living; spiritual power in teaching, preaching, and evangelism; and the ability to exercise authority without pride, receive scant attention.⁹⁷

What a rebuke this proves to be for our extraction of what we assume of those claiming a call to leadership (especially those that have gone to seminary).

Intervention Strategies

One of the unique facets about FA and FBC is that they are both learning organizations. During the hexagoning phase of this project, the leadership was extremely passionate about the discussion and eager to receive the proposed results of this study. Built in to each organizational system are several forums which facilitate growth.

The following will serve as a place to begin our plight.

1. Each week the residents are in meetings that are set up to be mutual environments of learning and exchange. In these meetings, there is a discussion based on a particular book that is being discussed. These meetings will serve as the perfect place for the intervention strategies to be introduced.

⁹⁷ Harvie M. Conn, *The Urban Face of Mission: Ministering the Gospel in a Diverse and Changing World* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 235.

2. At the end of the residency program, the residents are asked about possible ways to improve. Changes have been introduced each year based on helpful feedback given by past residents which has helped to enhance the program.
3. Once a resident has completed the residency, he returns the next year for a leadership round table. The leadership round table acts as a learning environment for the mentors and the mentored to collaborate and further learn from one another.
4. Once this paper has been graded and corrected, it will be presented to those who were gracious to help in its formulation.
5. As an emerging leader, I will develop urban leadership in North Philadelphia, PA once Epiphany Fellowship is started.
6. In order that these ideas may be propagated amongst a broader leadership base, this information will be used in the FA leadership conference. This event has about 500 leaders in attendance. Due to the need to personally practice this paper, the author will practice the principles as an Overseer, then teach it to others (Ezra 7:10).
7. Suggesting to the leadership to introduce one resident into the program that has a passion for a particular urban area. After being sent, tracking with him post the residency and holding him accountable to what was taught to be implemented.
8. Test indigenous leadership development in midtown Little Rock through what they are already doing. Rather than sending members of FBC down to midtown, propose that they identify people (other than pastors) to partner with

who grew up in midtown. Train those who want to have long-term influence on the area.

There are several potential hindrances to implementing these strategies:

1. Leadership lacks passion for this particular context. Because much of the leadership grew up and minister in a suburban or rural context, the tendency will be to digress to that which is familiar.
2. Not wanting to constrict potential residents to a particular context. Since the nature of this proposal demands a more narrow approach to leadership development and church planting, it might decrease the amount of prospects.
3. Credibility as a training entity. Because the church is located in a city that has a more suburban feel to it, potential candidates will consider FA and FBC unqualified to train them contextually and experientially. In addition, Little Rock, AR is not an urban hub.

Summary

Throughout the process of this study one thing rang true, Fellowship Associates is an organization well beyond its time and scope to develop strong urban leaders. Also, FBC is an extremely healthy church that invites healthy critiques. Hopefully the results of the current study will spur some thought as it relates FA acquiring a taste for urban leadership development as a formidable possibility within its system. By broadening their view of urban, it will allow for FA and FBC to remain committed to its motto, “to start small, go deep, and think big.” Next of great importance, is developing indigenous leaders. Currently, FA has had relocated leaders in many cases going to unfamiliar context. If each resident focuses on

indigenous leadership development, their cultural divide will possibly be closed more efficiently. A more clearly defined biblical basis for team leadership will incise on some of the struggle with such a paradigm shift for residents. Most of all developing and maintaining a healthy spiritual life is the key to each hindrance and leverage mentioned. On each level of this research, it will be developed in relation to leadership development in urban Philadelphia. With relation to the hip-hop generation, the above makes for a transferable basic blueprint for developing leaders in the hip-hop generation. In the next chapter, we will explore how Epiphany Fellowship has applied this section in planting in Philadelphia, PA.

In short, the above is the mere beginning of developing systemic thinking urban leaders who comprehend the theological and systemic nature of urban leadership development.

PART 3: CONFRONTATION**CHAPTER FIVE****OUTCOMES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

This work will serve as the foundation for further development, research, and implementation in the near future of urban leadership development. Through much careful observation and reading, it is clear that countless potential young leaders have desired to be intentionally mentored and discipled. Most would prefer to have a solid regiment of a focused biblical theology, godly modeling and meaningful field training, rather than be a “servant” that merely fits learning into the service schedule of their “mentor.” Many potential young leaders have yearned for the Lord’s leaders to develop a passion for helping them to grow. The difficulty is that many times the needs of the leaders are being served, but the needs of the followers go unmet and they in turn are undeveloped and burned out Ezek 34. Countless young men have been crying out for growth in ministry development facilitated by their “mentors”. Scripture from the beginning is built on the continued growth of God’s kingdom through leadership intentional development. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to assess Fellowship Associates in its ability to be an ideal model for leadership training. Moreover, not only assessing the organization, but attempting to find ways in which it can encourage Pastors to do the same on some scale. In context with this particular work, we are in dire need of leaders for the hip-hop generation to be engaged with the gospel. All of the work done in chapter four is being applied at Epiphany Fellowship Church in Philadelphia PA in a contextually sensitive way.

The question that was asked is: How do we encourage pastors to intentionally develop strong urban leaders for the 21st century?

Reflections on Gathering Information from Leadership

While working on this project I was absolutely surprised at the interest Leadership had in this project. The most encouraging part about it was their willingness to be a learning organization. Each leader wanted to know the results of this study, in order that they might introduce change where needed in the training of leaders. Another component was the questions which were asked about me as an African-American learning from Anglo men (which will be discussed in another section).

Several of the leaders were not sure of the word urban. It seemed to be an overlooked factor in answering the question. One reason might be that the word is misunderstood. Although this word was possibly misunderstood, the leaders each answered the question in a way that took into account other ministries' economic capability and ministry philosophy. Size, schooling, location, and passion of the leader being encouraged were all apart of their answers. Neither assumed that other ministries had the type of resources at their disposal as FA and FBC. Also, the residents were helpful in gathering information for this project. Surprisingly, their answers were somewhat reflective of what the FA leaders expressed.

Reflections on the Hexagon Process

Before working on this project, I probably would not have gathered information this concisely. Hexagoning proved useful and quite simple in practicing in a church context. The hexagoning process did not take long at all. Notably the

question proved to be extremely useful in gathering information for this project and for further work. Because of scheduling conflicts, I was not able to meet with everyone simultaneously. As a result, I was unable to observe the leaders interact with the others, yet this set back did not seem to take away from the fruitfulness of this process. During each session, I was in the office of the leader without anyone else present. My meeting with the residents was the only time in which I had a group in one environment. The hexagoning question was presented in a car on one of our road trips to observe former residents in their leadership situations.

Although the leaders at FA are not hip-hoppers, many of the general principles of leadership development are transferable. Epiphany Fellowship has been able to introduce the strategies of leadership development into the context in which we are ministering. Later we will explore the places at Epiphany where these strategies have been contextualized, applied and some of there results.

Reflection on the Barriers Faced in the Process

Initially, I did not take into account the cultural gap that there is between the leaders and myself. Most of the leaders grew up in the rural or suburban south or in a large city which has more of a suburban culture than an urban one. Such a vastly different and strategic target (Large complex urban cities) would be new. Because most of the leaders trained at FA have a passion for suburban and rural areas, introducing such a radical change in future resident selections could cause less interest in the program. The barrier that proved the most trying to work through was an understanding of urban. Particularly, it was noticed how each leader ignored the word urban in the debriefing and in the hexagoning question itself. Involuntarily each

one, without fail, reverted to personal context and general principles. At any rate, the leaders' responses can apply in any context. Yet there is a level of insight that needs to be present in order that the "What" can matriculate into the "How."

Reflection on the Analysis of the System

As a system, FA is an extremely malleable learning organization. Notably, it loans itself to correction, development, and improvement. Specifically, each leader has asked me to feel free to let them know if something is not transferable. By this, they are willing to hear those differences and be context sensitive. In addition, I was asked to teach them in areas of discontinuity. As a young leader and product of the hip-hop generation and God's grace, their example of humility and teachability has been superlatively convicting. They might not have all of the specifics in the area of context, but they are exceedingly godly men. Subsequently, they made adjustments in how they mentored me. Instead of mentoring me with disjunctive imperatives (on the how), they did so with questions. For instance, once a leader is finished explaining a "how" in their context, they say, Eric is this true or applicable for you in Philly? This has taught me more in leadership and discipleship than I have learned to date. In light of this, one of the first things we began to do is contextualize a curriculum they developed called *Men's Fraternity*⁹⁸once on ground in Philly. We changed the name from Men's Fraternity to Man 2 Man. While in the bible study phase of the plant, we began a contextualized version of this curriculum. The makeup of the men was 80% black, 15% Hispanic, and 5% white between the ages of 15-21. They also had advocates with them to fulfill their court requirements. The average age of the advocate was between the ages of 21-35, numbering about 40. Neither of

⁹⁸ <http://www.mensfraternity.com/>

the groups was Christian. We changed the history of men in America to more faithfully fit the background of the men we were ministering to. All of the above are a part of the hip hop generation.

Since FA is a Systems actor, they are open to seeing particular leverage points which can produce the most impact for Christ's Kingdom. I mentioned the book *The Fifth Discipline* to the president of FA and he bought it for all the residents. We went through it for three weeks and discussed all five disciplines.

I wept in a meeting with the residents and the president of the organization because I felt like much of what I was learning was not transferable; more on the "How" than the "What." Also, I had to express to them how different what I had been learning was from what I was exposed to in the African-American context (Not to say that Black culture is ungodly). For instance, I was learning about shared leadership in the primary leadership of the church. This approach is diametrically opposed to how I was trained. Upon being called to Philly, my teaching Pastor William Branch (who is an internationally renowned Christian hip-hop artist), began to work out the nature of our roles as a team leaders who are equal, but different in function.

Although this was freeing, I projected the persecution that my team and I will endure in doing team leadership. One of the principles of leadership that they teach is, "taking the initiative for the benefit of others." Frankly, the Lord is breaking me through the systemic theology of this program. Obviously, to date most models of leadership which I have been exposed to has looked more selfish than selfless. Therefore, servant leadership transcends culture and ethnicity.

The Effects on Epiphany Fellowship

The current study has played a major role in helping to keep the Epiphany leadership team focused. As we have understood the systemic nature of leadership development for any context as crucial, we have clearly seen the result of the absence of leadership and leadership development as primitive. Primitive not in the colonial sense, but primitive in light of redemption found in Christ through *Shalom*. In Haggai, God declares *shalom* to be the result of His manifested Glory through the obedience of His people to placing His biblical principles above their personal preferences (2:9). At the end of the book God states that Zerrubbabel is the signet of God to lead to *shalom*. Although this is God's messianic pledge to bring the Messiah through the bloodline of Zerrubbabel, his contemporary role as leader in his context was vital to the expansion of the rule and reign of God. As the Lord views leadership development in cities as central to the spread of the realization of His reign, so do we seek to perceive the same.

We are currently in what is called in Church planting the development phase⁹⁹. Although a Church should always be in a constant state of learning, the development season is a crucial phase post-launch, which calls for the development and nurturing of vital areas which was absent in the church prior to launch.

Pre-launch

Upon getting on ground in Philly in May of 2005, I began the process of learning the city; learning its make-up, needs, and passions. As this went on, I began

⁹⁹ www.GCA.cc. Within the curriculum of this website are the seven seasons of Church planting which layout the role of different aspects of ministry during different seasons of a Church start

to develop an objective passion for this city beyond my subjective inclinations.

Although my teaching pastor had great relationships with many people who might be potential core team members, I spent time with people to get to know them. We put together a cookout. About 20-30 people came through that day.

In September of that same year, we had a vision casting social. By this time we had acquired a website and we sent out e-vites through the internet. In the living room of one of our leaders we had over 40 people. The next week we began bible study. Our study was through first Corinthians, called “The Fabulous Life of the Christian.” As we looked at church culture in Philly and around the country, we viewed this book fitting to face the challenge of the early months. We believe that Paul is calling the Corinthian church to a higher understanding of the Christian faith in each chapter. For instance in the first part of chapter one, Paul admonishes the church concerning divisions. Therefore, we titled it, “From Clichés to Community”. People loved it and brought others the next week. The first week we had between 9-15 people in my living room. After the first bible study we move to a larger home.

Over the next 9 months we went from 9 to more than 50 people. Our challenges of space led us to a church basement. During this period, we spent much time mentoring men and women by counseling, meals, prayer walks, and outreach events. During this period, a group of 30-40 individuals and families emerged as a core team. As a result, we met twice a month outside of our bible studies to train them in various areas of church planting and leadership.

These outreaches included: Free water ice and pizza, the distribution of over 200 gifts to needy families, First Friday Fundamentals (FFF), and Man 2 Man (an

outreach to troubled youth). As we work on these outreaches, we had others working alongside of us gaining ministry experience.

First Friday Fundamentals began at another church in the city, but the leader became a part of our launch team. The pastor of the other church graciously blessed FFF to come to Epiphany. It is where we showcase the tenants of the reformation through the arts. An artist does music in line with the theological theme, a DJ spins, we have hip-hop style worship, film and theology¹⁰⁰, and a message.

The largest outreach we had was called From the Concert, to the Classroom, to the Corner. The concert represents large events where Christians gather with nonbelievers present for the purpose of exposing them to our world and the gospel. The classroom represents life on life discipleship that takes place after one is brought to faith in Christ. The corner is the place of missional engagement.

We developed a planning team who put together a massive outreach that had an attendance of more than 2000 people during the course of the day. In particular, the day included fried fish, water ice, three on three tournaments, dunking contest, three point contest, tables with Christian hip-hop apparel and arts, children's activities, Christian hip-hop concert outdoors, prizes, and evangelism. Many from the community stated, "We haven't had anything like this in years happen in our community." Following this week we launched publicly.

Post-launch

On the public launch of the church we had 200 people attend. We believe that the Lord honored our work by allowing us the privilege to shepherd this community of people. Indeed, launch did not end our development of leader's but began it.

¹⁰⁰ During our film and theology we play movie clips and critique them theologically.

From those leaders trained we have been able to launch new initiatives: Man 2 Man the remix, 31:30 (our women's ministry), street team, social justice team, hospitality, administrative staff, church planter training, internship program (this month), deacons (this year), covenant community (membership), community group, and organic discipleship.

For instance, Man 2 Man became the beginning of our search of how to develop contextual leaders in Philly. Post-launch I took on a group of 6 men from Philly and South Jersey who have grown into deacon and elder candidates. One might even become a Church Planter which we may plant in Camden, New Jersey. Also, this group is a part of the hip-hop generation.

Man 2 Man now has 25-30 men going through the book, *Godly Man's Picture* by Thomas Watson. The ministry has been going on for only a few months now. Previously it was merely an outreach to hip-hoppers, now it is a breeding ground for urban leaders for Christ's glory in the hip-hop generation.

Now the Lord has graced us to develop a team to help raise funding for the purchase of the building in which we were meeting. Our team ranges from media development, a realtor, stewardship, and artistic design. Furthermore, this team is the task force to begin the public process of fundraising through a banquet hip-hop generation style.

All of the above plays a unique role in being the beginnings of an international model for leadership development in the hip-hop generation. Below represents part of the process used to develop leaders strategically. In addition, I am coached and

trained even as a leader by Acts 29¹⁰¹, a sponsoring church pastor, and the people in our context.

SEVEN SEASONS OF CHURCH PLANTING & MULTIPLICATION	
Seasons	Developing Developing Gospel-Centered Ministries (Young Plant)
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church planter • Coach • Emerging leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice (s)/Intern (s) • Church members • Intercessors
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop frontline, kingdom prayer • Develop gospel worship & preaching • Develop transformational learning communities (all ages) • Develop missional lifestyles • Develop authentic caring community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop need-oriented evangelism ministries (word & deed) • Develop Membership & gift oriented ministries • Develop emerging functional structures • Develop Emerging Leaders
Time	One to Two Years
Goal	Effective gospel ministries developed by emerging leaders Ownership of the local Church of God & Kingdom Growth Community Credibility, New Converts & Disciples Made

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In view of the above figure, under the section on people, Epiphany is looking to develop leaders who can plant contextual churches in cities. Ten percent (10%) of the internal giving is placed aside for church planting in the next 2-3 years. Presently, leaders are being groomed through several facets of ministry. Our ministry is moving from “core team” to “covenant community” or membership. This covenant

¹⁰¹ See a29.org.

¹⁰² Figure 1.1 is an adaptation of Global Church Advancement’s seven seasons of church planting adapted for Epiphany Fellowship.

community moves people from spectators to becoming vitally involved in spreading the gospel in our city and region. During this process of 8 weeks, the elder will survey those in the classes and place them on a leadership track. Many have already been chosen for leadership. A group of 5 men are being discipled by the lead pastor. On Wednesdays a group of men are going through a book by Thomas Watson called *The Godly Man's Picture* (of course it is being contextualized to Philly). Every other week these men gather together and engage in acts of justice, mercy and evangelism in the North Philadelphia area. As men are taught through life on life discipleship, acts of kindness, and biblical models of leadership they will in turn take the lead in the areas of ministry that have been laid out before them. While the ministry expands, those faithful over the areas delegated to them will be given more responsibility. Can one imagine elders and deacons being developed and trained from the hip-hop generation? Within the first 2-3 years, elders will be appointed.

Our goal is to “do theology”! The particular area of theology that we are interested deeply in is leadership development. We are experiencing a multitude of challenges. One of which will make an excellent work for further study. The Black Power generation and the Hippie generation of the 60’s have removed has become passive in relation to child rearing. Within the civil-rights generation was a sense of legacy in parenting that does not seem to exist among the intermediate generation, except among first generation immigrants. Individualism found in the American cities has damaged the ethic of community commonality. Not merely as a redemptive ideology, but as seen in natural revelation. Harvie Conn speaks of these roots candidly and prophetically,

Cities were founded on individuals and interest groups pursuing their own private goals. Even the geography of the cities spoke of it—open, leaving the individual uncontained...Individualism shaped even the business world of the eighteenth century colonial city. Towering above the other heroes of this urban environment was the entrepreneur...The growing ideology of individualism could be seen on the world of politics as well. Individual liberties and individual rights became the natural rights of John Locke...Many colonist saw the need for war, not in the name of revolution, but in the name of the natural rights of every individual for independence.¹⁰³

All aspects of individualism are not bad because there is an aspect of self government that each human being will be responsible for before Jesus Christ (Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:11-14). Since all will be held accountable for their action, we must make some decisions that require individual responsibility. However, this must not be to the exclusion of community benefits. In light of the roots of individualism in America, today we are forced to train a generation that is highly individualistic and becoming less tribal. Therefore, issues of race are not as pertinent to them. Even those who take on a crew or cliché aka tribe, it is for individualistic gain. Developing leaders in such a complex social milieu is challenging, because the kingdom apologetic of *koinonia* must be embraced. Without it, leadership development becomes a personal means of promoting ones personal efforts and dreams without a passion for the King and without context of kingdom development and influence.

By the grace of God, Epiphany Fellowship will be a model of leadership development that leads to the impact of the overall kingdom of God growing by: being a Church planting Church, urban research in Philly, artistic development, indigenous ownership of community development, mercy and justice, and spiritual formation.

¹⁰³ Conn, Harvie M. *The American City and the Evangelical Church: A Historical Overview*. Grand Rapids, IL: Baker Books, 1994. pp19-20

Areas for Further Study

Although many would see this as a mere niche in the area of leadership studies, however this work revealed many other topics which deserve more probing. The following represent only a few areas which came to light during this project:

1. *Team leadership in the urban context.* In preparation for this paper and in my FA residency, I read several works which were key in developing my current biblical philosophy of leadership. As I studied scripture and sought the counsel of the church universal, I found a great need for team leadership. Moreover, this is not merely for study, but for the doing of theology with the building of Christ's kingdom in mind. Since urban ministry is challenging, why should we do it with a top down approach. Team leadership is systemic in that it gets more done and impacts the entire system. Among the hip-hop generation, we have seen so many distrust leadership and authority. Much of this distrust comes from being let down by people that claim integrity, but have no accountability. The media even paints a grim picture of pastors and Christians which attribute to a high volume of barriers to the gospel and to the church. As stated earlier, the nihilism of inner-city culture has played a major role in the attitudes of youth. Gangsters who do not trust anyone but themselves is a powerful image to today's youth and young adults. "Nothing was more effective at reinforcing the association between nihilism and the new black youth culture that the black gangster films' portrayal of the thugged out black male (who lives and breathes the street) as a prototype for young

black manhood.”¹⁰⁴ Team leadership will also be a picture of humility and strength. In addition, it is biblical (Titus 1:5). On our teaching calendar, I preach and teach 50-65% of the time while the other teaching pastor takes the rest.

2. *Proclaiming the Gospel to the hip-hop generation.* There must be more work done in how to engage the postmodern subculture of hip-hop with the gospel through both life and lips. How do they hear from the standpoint of form? How can Christians remain faithful in missional engagement to this generation.
3. *Customizing Leadership Curriculum (The Leader and His Context).* We all make assumptions based on what we have seen work in our particular context. Yet, one must not assume that the doing of theology looks the same in every context. Therefore, a leader must understand the context for which he is training his disciple (s). With this in mind, curriculum must be developed to suit the particular language and make up of the urban context being engaged. Many make assumptions of a multitude of contexts based on majority American culture. For instance, everyone assumes that all Churches will utilize the format of a community group to foster biblical community in every context. In the inner city, many people don’t trust people in their homes. The reason should be obvious, however, I will indulge. Crimes such as theft cause many not to want their home cased out by neighbors. In addition, embarrassment or mistrust could also be factors. With this in mind, home groups may not be the best platform to begin with in helping people get into

¹⁰⁴ Bakari Kitwana, (*The Hip Hop Generation*. Basic Civitas Books), 131.

caring community with one another. Questions such as: what are the ways in which people naturally socialize in unredeemed community now? Where are the neutral locations of trust where people are able to gather for small group interaction? Or is there another way of developing people in biblical community that doesn't exist in this context that can be created?

Most curriculums reflect a suburban or just non-urban culture. Because of this, there is a vital need to develop leadership who are indigenous and or trained in the theology and a biblical theology of redemption can develop materials which are readily accessible to urban people. At Epiphany we have had to take Men's Fraternity from FA and contextualize it to our context. For blacks in America, we think in different historical terms than those created by majority American culture. Certain points in history or phrases are not familiar, therefore, we tweaked them to fit the context. Not only can materials be created, but they can also be modified with the permission of the owner to aid in urban areas. For example, our current membership class is a modified version of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington which is a white indie rock influenced culture. Moreover, the class has 65 people in it; the majority of them are from the hip-hop generation. Each week we are encouraged by them concerning the impact that it is having on their lives.

4. *Starting a Healthy Church Movement, Rather Than a Church Planting Movement.* In church planting, one of the most overlooked factors is leadership. Especially for the urban context. It seems that when it comes to urban ministry, qualifications are subsidized. Because of the overwhelming

needs in urban ministry and (in some cases) low expectations from target audiences, church planters are sent who would not otherwise be seen as a leader in other contexts. Due to this notion, urban ministry has suffered. Thus, urban church planting has suffered. Getting by on abridged resources is one thing, but getting by on unqualified leadership is a travesty, thereby, making short lived and unhealthy church plants. It could be argued that urban areas demand an even more high level of leadership than many other contexts. Taking this approach, the hip-hop generation will be saturated with a multitude of witnesses that are contextually engaging them in the language of their culture. Nevertheless, leadership will be done through these churches and more within the hip-hop generation will be engaged (Acts 14).

5. *The Spiritual Vitality of the Urban Leader.* By far the most underestimated subject. Although Linthicum and Mott deal with this subject in the area of “the powers,” meaning spiritual warfare. There must be a work that lays out an understanding of the need for spiritual health in the urban context. Because many urban churches begin with a runway to success, ministry can take a toll on a leader who is not grounded in abiding in Jesus (John 15). From financial provision for the mission by sending entities (if there is one), low economics of those being reached, basic understanding of the need for education of those being reached, low value of family, life experience of those being reached, and familiarity with solid Christianity make it difficult to begin where others may already have common ground in their context. Every urban ministry is not an inner-city ministry. Therefore, in this postmodern, post-Christian, neo-

pagan society there needs to be leaders developed who are spiritually virtuous.

Paul tells Timothy in Urban Ephesus “keep close watch on yourself and on the teaching” (1Tim 4:16). Phil Jackson Senior pastor of The House says he was counseled by two other leaders leading a church in the hip-hop context, “The House would be only as sustainable as our prayer life was.”¹⁰⁵

6. *Missional Theology and the Inner-city.* Is missional theology new to the church in the city or is it merely a discovery of suburban churches that have seen the failure of attractional and non-incarnational ministry? Urban demographers and missiologists seem to have always held that ministry in the city must be treated as a mission field, especially for the relocated leader.

7. *Inter-generational Reconciliation: Civil Rights, Yuppie/Bourgeoisie*

Generation vs Hip-hop Postmodern Generation. The length of these titles displays the level of complexity in attempting to pin down an actual clear title for the generations in American culture. Although these titles are not comprehensive, they represent the broad stroke of social backgrounds in existence in the U.S. Coining the primary cultural understanding of each one of these groups would be a major accomplishment. In addition, the social disconnect between the generations would be another great work. However, much tension has arisen between the generations within the Church and the new frontier for mission. The latter are frustrated with the forms, function, and face of the former. Moreover the younger generations view the older as committed to a void legalism. This legalism is found in an unbridled

¹⁰⁵ Efrem Smith and Phil Jackson, (*The Hip-hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping Our Culture*), 203.

commitment to forms which are not biblically driven, caught in a time warp which does not find its place in contemporary society. On the other hand, the older views the younger as a stealth maverick with no authority structure governing it and no sense of loyalty to anything. Both are in many ways true, but each group must find common ground in order that the kingdom might experience overall growth and the faithful transmission of the gospel from a contextual and comprehensive standpoint. Even on the world stage tensions arise among the generations..."the NAACP has missed the mark with the issues that matter the most to youth. Many hip-hop generationers were stunned and disappointed, or confused by the NAACP's decision to spearhead the Million Youth March."¹⁰⁶ This was done in light of the fact that there was already one.

8. *Missional vs. Incarnational.* Has incarnational ministry within the inner-city been the pre- missional movement that many are speaking of currently? Many of the principles of missional ministry contain the same principles that urban missiologists have been exclaiming needs to take place everywhere especially the city. Moreover, contextualization is the main thrust of both. Both look to Jesus Christ as the pioneer of each philosophy of ministry. Each seeks to use an integrated understanding of the theological and social disciplines as a platform for long-term impact and ministry. Both share the need for a rigorous theological regimen in the development of leadership. However, Christians tend to assume what is needed rather than study the needs of a

¹⁰⁶ Bakari Kitwana, (*The Hip Hop Generation*. Basic Civitas Books), 185.

context in view. At Epiphany, we conducted several video documentaries to ask several questions in our city called “The Pulse of the City.”

- What do you feel is going on in Philly right now?
- What do you think the two greatest needs in Philly are?
- What are the two top influences that influence people in Philly?
- When you think or hear the word “church” what comes to mind?
- If you could ask anything from a local church, what would it be?
- Do you think that the bible is reliable? Why or why not?
- When you think of Jesus Christ what is the first thing that comes to mind?

We found the answers to be astounding. For example, one issue that surfaced was that 98% percent of the men interviewed in the immediate community considered themselves Sunni Salafee Muslims. Although not outwardly hostile, they wanted nothing to do with conversation surrounding the gospel. Consequently, there is much more work to do.

9. *The Broad Scope of Modern day Urban Demographics.* Because of the revitalization of many urban cities, there has been much attention given to cities as a systemic locale to see regions engaged with the gospel. Many urban leaders think of urban as limited to a particular ethnic and economic sector of society. Yet, this is a misnomer, in that cities are much more complex than ethnic make-up and economic groups. Mainly the lower socio-economic strata has been explored and Blacks and Hispanics. With this in mind the vastness of cities must be exegeted in light of the expansions in the

new millennium. A study must be conducted in cities experiencing urban renewal and calculating how many people within the most densely populated sections have been influenced by hip-hop culture, knowingly or unknowingly.

10. *What About Ethnically Based Training.* Does color and culture of the leadership coaches matter in leadership development? If so, what needs to change? If not, what were the factors that played a role in the communication gaps being closed between the coach and leader? In the hip-hop generation, does race act as a barrier between ethnicities which hold hip-hop culture in common?

11. *Seminaries, Cities, Leadership.* What is the role of mainline seminaries in developing leaders to be sent to cities? Can they be convinced of the systemic nature of cities and leadership development? Will seminaries consider hip-hop culture in classes on mission and cross-cultural ministry classes? Or, will they continue to shoot in the dark with obsolete methodologies?

APPENDIX A

THE EPIPHANY FELLOWSHIP WEBSITE

EPIPHANY FELLOWSHIP



Show off the Glory of Christ in Every Area of Life

March 27, 2007

[Homepage](#)

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[Online Bible](#)

[Blog](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact Us](#)

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Covenant Community

IS HERE! Click Here For More Info.

Featured Resource

Check out the featured resource.

JOHN PIPER

BROTHERS, WE ARE NOT PROFESSIONALS: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry

The aim of these thirty short exhortations to pastors is to spread a radical, pastoral passion for the supremacy and centrality of Jesus Christ in every sphere of life and ministry and culture. Increasingly, a ministry under the banner of Christ's supremacy is offensive to the impulses of professional clergy who like to be quoted respectfully by the local newspaper. (9/29/2006)

What's next!

2007 Prayer Commitment
When: 3/22/2007

Man2Man
When: 3/28/2007 7:00 PM

Sunday Worship Service
When: 4/1/2007 11:00 AM

First Friday Fundamentals
When: 4/2/2007 8:00 PM

Video Coming Soon!

State of the Church ADDRESS

recommended resources

PHOTO albums

"State of the Church Address" (press play)



The Crisis in Our Culture Part I

Most of those born after 1965 (especially African-Americans) have been exposed to western American Christianity. So many of us have become disgruntled with the gap of relevance which exists between this current generation and the past generations. Because of this great chasm, this generation has denied the historic Christian faith and its forms of expression that is distant from their present day experience. Postmodernism and hip-hop have developed a strategic partnership as a means of cultural expression and identity, for those without identity and meaning.

Ministering in this Pop Culture has been one of the most passionate pursuits of the Epiphany Team. Seeing the culture take the Hip Hop culture and use it as its missionary has been a matter deep within our thoughts. We have witnessed the humble urban form of expression become one of the greatest capitalistic commodities to date. Hip hop is everywhere and not many ministries have taken the time to study it and use it to the glory of God to identify with today's emerging American. It rules commercials, sports, media, sitcoms, business marketing strategies, and the hearts and minds of the world's young adults and youth. One of the most staggering realities is that Hip hop has made a formidable impression on every continent except Antarctica.

Galatians 4:4 “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.”

Verse 5 makes the purpose of Christ's coming clear. What does fullness encompass? Many commentators suggest that the fact the Roman Empire built roads provided the opportunity for travel and spread of the gospel to occur. In the same way, the pop culture empire has used the Hip Hop Culture to capitalistically reach every continent. Therefore, we plan to use certain elements of the genre as common ground for the gospel without propagating its negative elements (**Matthew 28:18-20; John 4; Acts 17:16-34**).

Our Story



The Macedonian Call (Acts 16:6-10)

6 They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; 7 and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

A group of young families and individuals have been called to reflect the Glory of the living God and His Son Jesus Christ through church planting in the city of Philadelphia, PA. Initially, we received this Macedonian call from a young man by the name of William “Duce” Branch. William has been doing evangelism in Philly for over 12 years. Later our team took several site visits to the city. During our first site visit, we prayed and meditated on Numbers 13-14 (God’s Demographic study). Once we returned and sought the Lord further, it was inexplicably clear that He was calling us to Philly.



Why Epiphany Fellowship?

"Epiphany" is a Greek word which means to show forth, to appear, to become visible, or to clearly show. In Titus 2:11-13:

**11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,
12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly**

**desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,
13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great
God and Savior, Christ Jesus, ...**

Paul gives the basis for right (godly) living in the current time period is based on the first and second comings (advents) of Jesus Christ. Paul uses this word to describe the two most strategic times that Christ appeared and will appear.

The first Epiphany describes Christ birth into the world and the second Epiphany refers to Christ conquering the world while displaying his Glory. In this present age, those who have been changed by his first coming are to be “Living Epiphanies or Glory Reflectors” which affirm the reality of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

What We Envision for This Present Age

The Church

We want to develop disciples that are able to minister in the culture and help new disciples to grow in God’s word in every area of their lives and shining the truth of the person of Jesus Christ to the glory of the Triune God. We cannot stress enough the ***realization that this Church will not be a “Hip Hop Church,” but a CHURCH.***

Albeit we will be sensitive to the unique needs of those heavily influenced by that culture. The target group will be those from ages 18-44 who are unsaved or without a community of disciples of which to bond in a Theo-centric community.



We would like to see The Name of Jesus Christ Magnified by the credibility of the Church being reestablished in the world through Robust & Relevant Worship, Rich & Relevant Word, and Real & Relevant Witnesses (Eph. 2:20-21). We want to have inward depth, and be outwardly missional.

Why Philly? (Matthew 9:36-38)

- Calling
- 80-85% unchurched population
- High Crime Rate (city-data.com)
- The need for more churches to plant in major urban cities
- Philly is strategic in reaching the culture we are seeking to reach

- Those influenced by Nation of Islam, Al-Islam, 5% Nation of Islam, Pan Africanists, Black conscious, Hebrew Israelites, and those with bias' towards traditional expressions Christianity (ignorant, overly judgmental, immoral, hypocritical, greedy, elitists) are on the increase.
- Need for more strong Leadership
- Philly is the 5th largest city in America
- Hopelessness and disenfranchisement

APPENDIX B

VISION MISSION AND STRATEGY

- Christo-Centrism Colossians 1
 - Epiphany Fellowship will encourage and stress the need to emphasize the centrality of Jesus Christ and the uniqueness of Him as both Fully God and Fully Man whom we worship and take our P's & Q's from
- Commitment Act 2:42
 - Epiphany Fellowship will be committed to the teaching and application of the Apostolic doctrine by Making Disciples through the power of the Holy Spirit in order to see Christ formed in the lives of the body. We will also seek to be an ongoing learning organism (1Jn. 1:1-4, 2:24).
- Community (Acts 2:44)
 - Epiphany Fellowship will seek to build a healthy environment by which believers may fellowship with other believers, with Christ at the center (1John 1).
 - Epiphany Fellowship will seek to be a ministry that commits itself to the “One Another's” of Scripture. The desire is that all members of Epiphany Fellowship never go through life with unmet needs.
- Communion (Acts 2:46)

- Epiphany Fellowship will seek to observe the Lord's death on every occasion we assemble. We will also commit to a comprehensive lifestyle of worship.
- Conversions (Acts 2:47)
 - Epiphany Fellowship will seek to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ through Missions and Evangelism. The hope is that the fellowship, love of the saints, and godly living will attract unbelievers to the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our desire is that new converts will feel like they are entering a family not just an organization.
- Culturally Relevant Ministry(1Chron. 12:32, 1Cor. 9:15-27; Isa 61; Jer 29; Luke 16:8b)
 - Epiphany Fellowship will Contextualize its ministry by sound understanding of the biblical text and a sound understanding of the culture for the purpose of reaching the lost through a faithfulness to the gospel and discipling them.
 - In addition, Epiphany Fellowship will seek the shalom of the city in which it ministers through Spiritual Justice & Social Justice.

We visualize:

- People loving one another based on a biblical understanding of love
- A solid & sound community of people who live out the Good News about Jesus Christ through both life and lips

- People who are committed to serving others in spite of life's circumstances
- Balancing the Belief in Theology with the Doing of Theology
- The Church of Jesus Christ regaining credibility and impacting the overall kingdom of Christ (Eph 3:20-21)
- Seeing Jesus Christ, His Gospel, & His Kingdom lifted high through seeing people's lives noticeably redeemed on every level (Col 1:19-23)
- People of different ethnicities submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ and in turn becoming indigenous missionaries to the hip hop generation globally (2Cor 5:17-21)
- A Kingdom Driven church planting movement in the N.E. U.S. and selected foreign countries. Also, Indigenous leaders being raised up in major urban centers (Acts 14:21-23)
- Cross-generational reconciliation between the pre & post Civil Rights Generations (Mal 3, Ezra, Titus 2)
- Lost young adults both single & married passionate & productive in the kingdom of Christ
- People in our target area walking to church
- Solid and Relevant Bible teaching being applied to the lives of disciples on a grass root level
- Equipping the saints to engage the Culture (Eph 4)

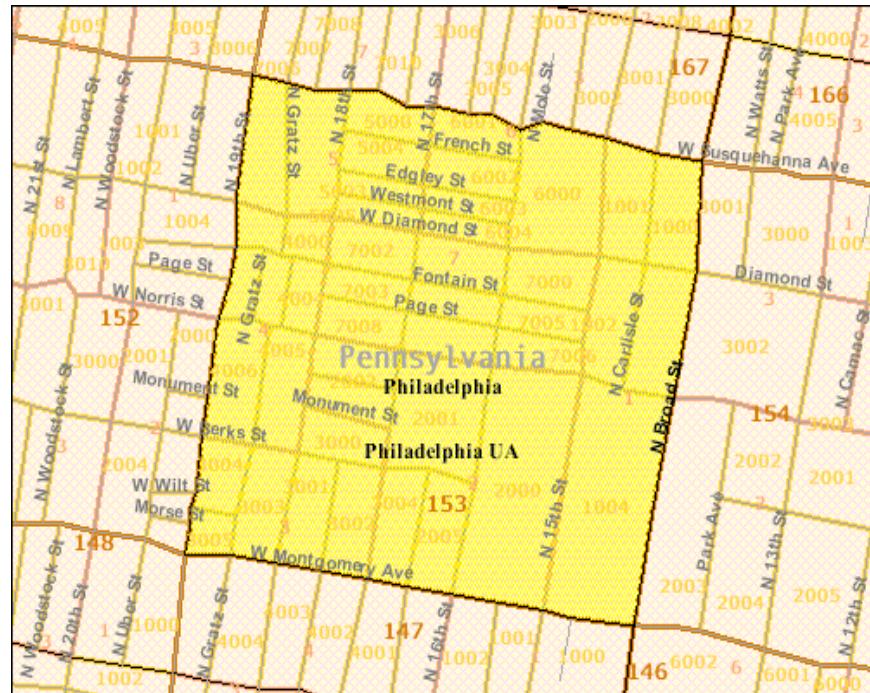
How And When Will This Church Be Planted?

2005	2006-2007
<p>Phase 1: The Gathering (Luke 5-9) Move To Philly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Seek the face of God •Raise full support •Intimate awareness of our target area & city <p>Launch Group Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pray •Gather a start-up group •Pour vision into the launch group •Begin weekly Bible Studies •Identify potential and actual leaders •Do gift and personality assessments •Develop strategic start-up 	<p>Phase 2: The Launch (Acts 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pray •Launch •Usher in New Disciples •Start Church wide Cypha Groups •Street outreach & Cypha Café •Ownership of Start-up ministries <p>Phase 3: The Strengthening (Acts 14:21-25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Transition into specific ministry areas •Appoint leaders

APPENDIX C

GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Census Tract 153, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania



Boundaries

- State
- '00 County
- '00 Census Tract
- '00 Block Group
- '00 Block
- '00 Place
- '00 Urban Area
- '00 Urban Area

Features

- Major Road
- Street
- Stream/Waterbody
- Stream/Waterbody

Population Changes in Philadelphia, 1990-2000

High population loss
 -33% to -11%

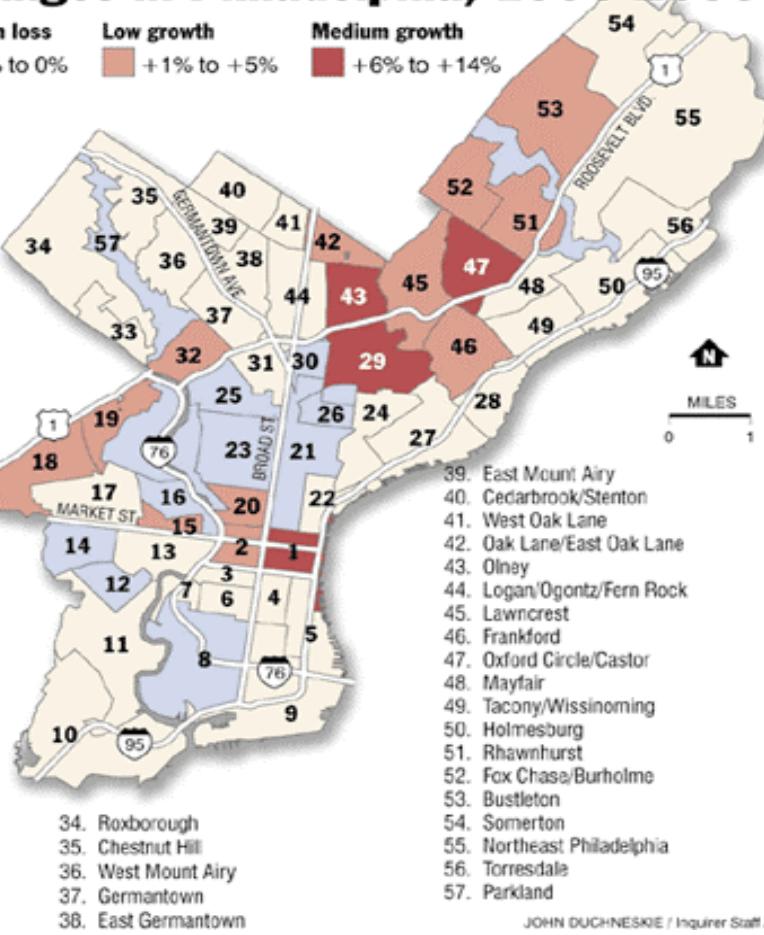
Population loss
 -10% to 0%

Low growth
 +1% to +5%

Medium growth
 +6% to +14%

Key to neighborhoods

1. Center City/East
2. Center City/West
3. Schuylkill/SW Center City
4. Bella Vista/Southwark
5. Queen Village/Pennsport
6. Point Breeze
7. Grays Ferry
8. South Philadelphia/West
9. South Philadelphia/East
10. Eastwick
11. Southwest Philadelphia
12. Kingsessing
13. University City
14. West Philadelphia/Cobbs Creek
15. Powelton Village/W. Powelton
16. Mantua
17. West Philadelphia/Parkside
18. Overbrook
19. Wynnefield
20. Fairmount/Spring Garden
21. North Philadelphia/East
22. Northern Liberties/Fishtown
23. North Philadelphia/West
24. Kensington
25. Allegheny West
26. Fairhill
27. Port Richmond
28. Bridesburg
29. Juniata Park/Feltonville
30. Hunting Park
31. Tioga/Nicetown
32. East Falls
33. Manayunk
34. Roxborough
35. Chestnut Hill
36. West Mount Airy
37. Germantown
38. East Germantown
39. East Mount Airy
40. Cedarbrook/Stenton
41. West Oak Lane
42. Oak Lane/East Oak Lane
43. Olney
44. Logan/Ogontz/Fern Rock
45. Lawncrest
46. Frankford
47. Oxford Circle/Castor
48. Mayfair
49. Tacony/Wissinoming
50. Holmesburg
51. Rhawnhurst
52. Fox Chase/Burholme
53. Bustleton
54. Somerton
55. Northeast Philadelphia
56. Torresdale
57. Parkland

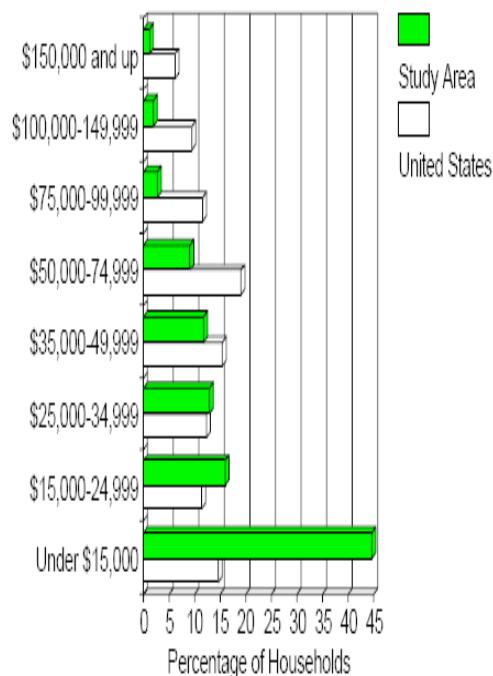


JOHN DUCHNEKIE / Inquirer Staff Artist

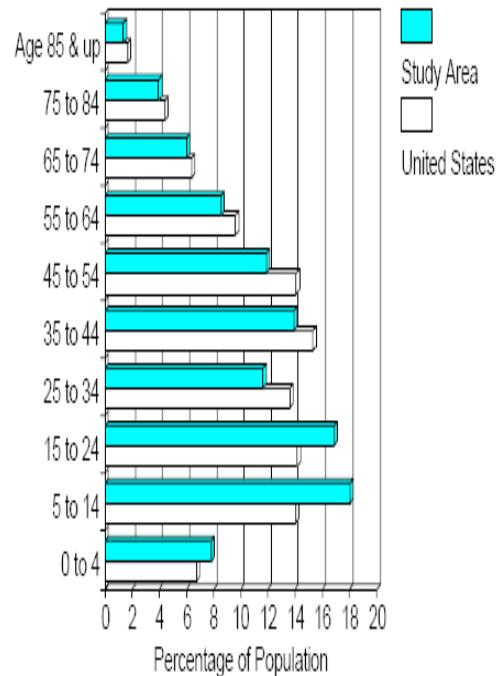
Note: The Following Demographic summary was provided by the Baptist convention of Pennsylvania south Jersey courtesy of percept to for the benefit of Epiphany Fellowship Church. This is a portion of the summary. It is used to by Epiphany for contextualization purposes and leadership development.

POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY						
	2000 Census		2005 Update		2010 Projection	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
↓ White (Non-Hispanic)	5,114	4.9%	4,729	4.6%	4,483	4.5%
↓ African-American (Non-Hisp)	79,366	75.3%	76,255	73.8%	72,945	72.8%
▲ Hispanic/Latino	18,773	17.8%	19,710	19.1%	19,833	19.8%
▲ Asian/Other (Non-Hisp)	2,153	2.0%	2,597	2.5%	2,964	3.0%
POPULATION BY GENDER						
↓ Female	57,856	54.9%	56,489	54.7%	45,650	45.5%
▲ Male	47,549	45.1%	46,801	45.3%	45,650	45.5%
POPULATION BY GENERATION						
▲ Generation Z (Born 2002 and later)	0	0.0%	6,060	5.9%	14,255	14.2%
Millenials (Born 1982 to 2001)	35,015	33.2%	36,578	35.4%	31,889	31.8%
↓ Survivors (Born 1961 to 1981)	30,892	29.3%	27,842	27.0%	26,993	26.9%
↓ Boomers (Born 1943 to 1960)	21,640	20.5%	19,486	18.9%	17,283	17.2%
↓ Silents (Born 1925 to 1942)	12,745	12.1%	9,855	9.5%	8,230	8.2%
↓ Builders (Born 1924 and earlier)	5,116	4.9%	3,468	3.4%	1,576	1.6%
AGE						
▲ Average Age		33.5		34.0		34.6
▲ Median Age		31.3		32.1		32.7
INCOME						
▲ Average Household Income		\$26,665		\$28,244		\$30,659
▲ Median Household Income		\$18,455		\$20,800		\$22,501
▲ Per Capita Income		\$9,049		\$9,613		\$10,520

Households By Income-2005



Population by Age-2005



The average household income in the study area is \$28244 a year as compared to the U.S. average of \$63301. The average age in the study area is 34.0 and is projected to increase to 34.6 by 2010. The average age in the U.S. is 36.9 and is projected to increase to 37.5 by 2010.

Description	Study Area		U.S. Average	U.S. Comparative Index
	Number	Percent		
MARITAL STATUS				
Marital Status All Persons 15 and Older	77,535			
▲ Single (Never Married)	39,389	50.8%	27.1%	188
↓ Married	23,112	29.8%	56.5%	53
Divorced/Widowed	15,034	19.4%	16.4%	118
Marital Status Females 15 and Older	44,433			
▲ Single (Never Married)	21,839	49.2%	24.1%	204
↓ Married	11,934	26.9%	54.6%	49
Divorced/Widowed	10,660	24.0%	21.3%	113
Marital Status Males 15 and Older	33,102			
▲ Single (Never Married)	17,550	53.0%	30.3%	175
↓ Married	11,178	33.8%	58.6%	58
Divorced/Widowed	4,374	13.2%	11.2%	118
FAMILY STRUCTURE				
Households By Type	35,768			
▲ Single Male	4,706	13.2%	11.0%	120
Single Female	6,052	16.9%	14.8%	114
↓ Married Couple	6,770	18.9%	52.5%	36
▲ Other Family - Male Head of Household	2,568	7.2%	4.1%	176
▲ Other Family - Female Head of Household	13,826	38.7%	11.8%	326
↓ Non Family - Male Head of Household	843	2.4%	3.4%	70
Non Family - Female Head of Household	1,004	2.8%	2.4%	118
Households With Children 0 to 18	15,019			
↓ Married Couple Family	3,600	24.0%	68.9%	35
▲ Other Family - Male Head of Household	1,325	8.8%	6.8%	130
▲ Other Family - Female Head of Household	9,939	66.2%	23.2%	285
Non Family	155	1.0%	1.1%	96
Population By Household Type	105,833			
Family Households	83,728	79.1%	82.2%	96
Non Family Households	16,001	15.1%	15.0%	101
▲ Group Quarters	6,104	5.8%	2.8%	209

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE PUBLICATIONS OF EPIPHANY FELLOWSHIP

Epiphany Fellowship Presents:

FROM THE CONCERT CLASSROOM TO THE CORNER

Outreach to North Philly & Beyond

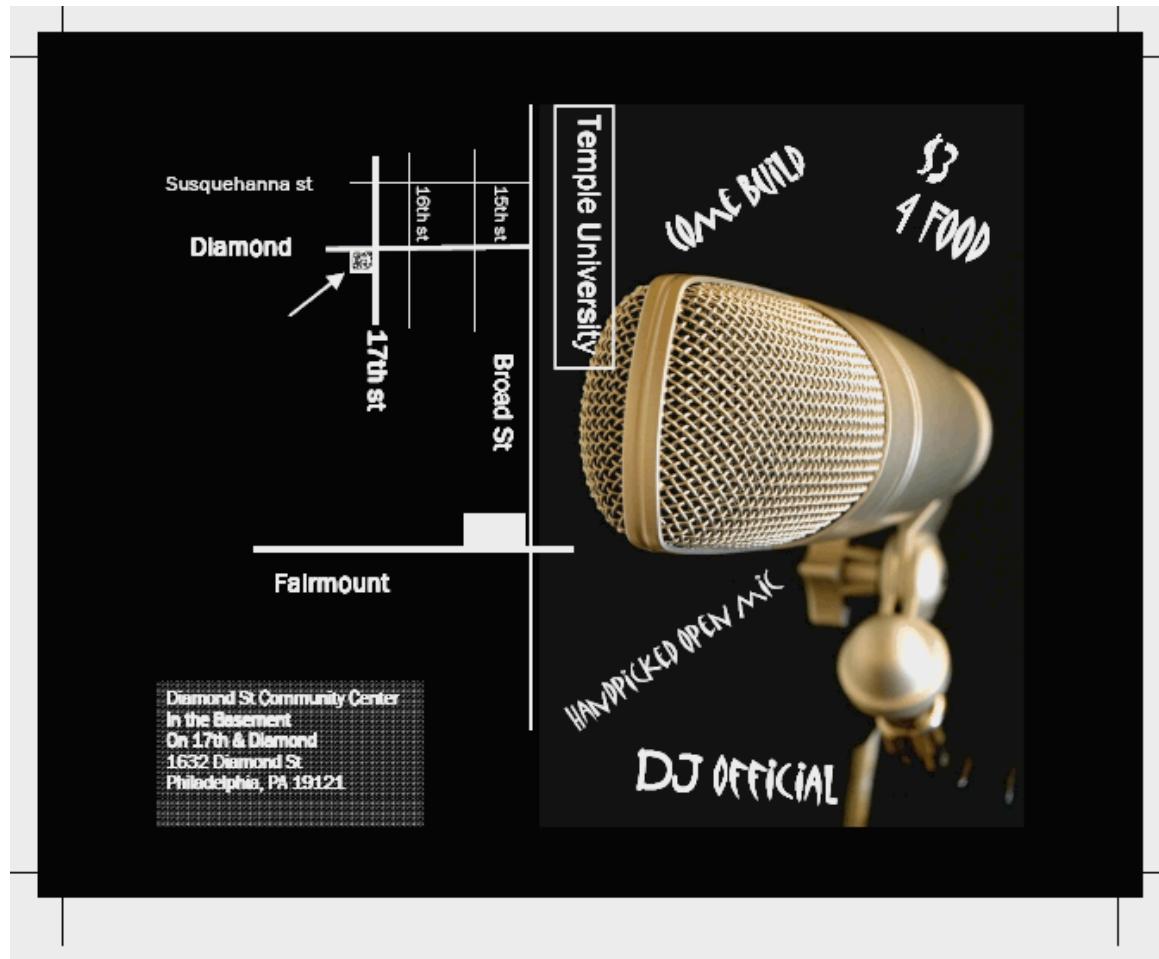
>> Saturday, September 9th: 1-8pm <<
>> Fun & Games for the Kids <<
>> Free Food, Giveaways & Much More ! <<

>> Located Between 16th-17th on Diamond
>> For More Info, Visit: epiphanyfellowship.org

>> FEATURING LIVE
PERFORMANCES BY:

- THE CROSS MOVEMENT
- REDEEMED THOUGHT
- EVERYDAY PROCESS
- DA' TRUTH
- SHAI LINNE
- TRIP LEE
- R-SWIFT
- FLAME
- J.R.



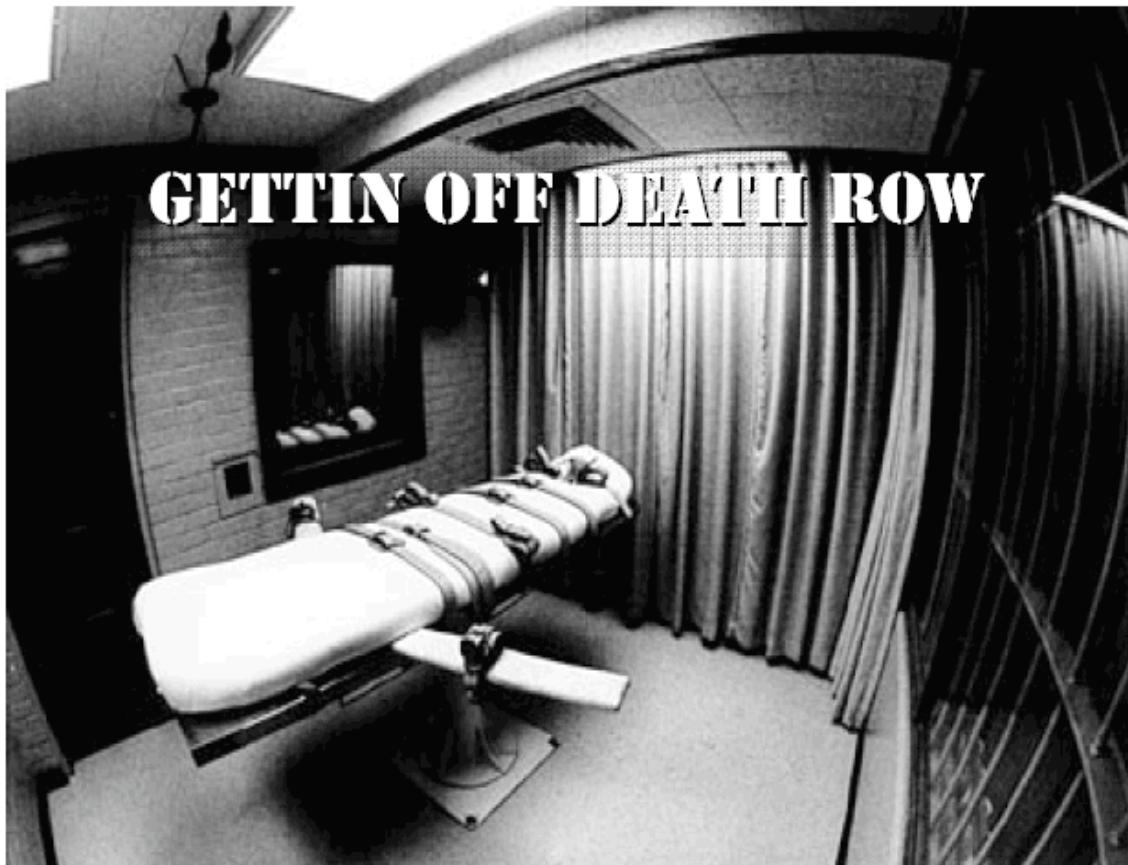


This was an after party hosted by Epiphany after the Ambassador's Live DVD recording.



This was the picture on our postcard during the gathering phase of our ministry.

THIS IS A CONTEXUALIZED STREET TRACT MADE BY ERIC
MASON. NO UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION OF THESE
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The Case
God sentenced the 1st man to death because he dropped the ball. Gen. 3:13

The Crime
God is beefin with human beings because we became the 1st man's accomplices. Rom. 5:12

The Subpoena
God calls everyone to stand before His court... Hebrews 9:27, Revelation 20:12-15

The Warrant
Because of the beef, God puts a contract out on our lives... Ephesians 2:1-3

The Sentence
God has sentenced every human being to death by Legal Separation. Matt 25:41, Rom 6:23a

The Scapgoat
God sent Jesus Christ to be charged with our crimes. 2Corinthians 5:21

The Pardon
God drops all the charges through Jesus Christ taking the fall for us... Rom 5:9-11, Col 1:13-14

We Chop It Up on Thursdays From 7-9pm @
Come Learn More:
Epiphany Fellowship Church
Diamond St Community Center (In da Basement)
1632 Diamond St, Philadelphia, PA 19121

APPENDIX E
MINISTRY PICTURES



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Mr. Mason currently lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with his wife Yvette and his son Immanuel. He now serves as the Co-founder and Lead Pastor of Epiphany Fellowship Church in the inner-city of Philadelphia.